











## STUDIES AND REPORTS

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## PREFACE

The systematic use of foreign labour by Germany for the purpose of increasing its productive capacity was one of the outstanding aspects of the Second World War. Even before hostilities actually broke out in 1939 Austrians and Czechoslovaks had already been added to the labour force of the old pre-1938 Reich. As the war progressed, almost the whole of Europe was brought within the German orbit, and Germany deported and exploited foreign labour on an enormous scale.

The International Labour Office has closely followed these developments and has regularly published information upon their various phases and aspects. A previous study, published by the Office in 1943<sup>1</sup>, reached the conclusion that more than 30 million inhabitants of the continent of Europe had been displaced from their own countries since the beginning of the war, and that this figure included about 6½ million foreign workers and prisoners of war employed inside Germany. According to a later estimate<sup>2</sup>, by January 1944 the figure had risen to 8,600,000, including 6,400,000 foreign workers and 2,200,000 prisoners of war. There are indications that in the course of 1944 the number of foreign workers increased still further.

To the foreigners employed in Germany must be added millions of others who worked for the German war effort under German control in their own countries, or were moved by the German authorities from their countries to other German-occupied territories. How this gigantic movement was organised; how recruitment and distribution were undertaken; what the conditions were under which these workers lived and laboured; how it was possible to use this great mass of workers who, from the German point of view, were potentially disloyal; what care was taken of the workers in case of sickness; what conditions they had to fulfil in order to return home; and how their families fared while the breadwinners were away; these are among the questions which this Report attempts to answer.

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<sup>1</sup> Eugene KULISCHER: *The Displacement of Population in Europe*, Studies and Reports, Series O, No. 8 (International Labour Office, Montreal, 1943).

<sup>2</sup> "The Mobilisation of Foreign Labour by Germany", in *International Labour Review*, Vol. L, No. 4, Oct. 1944, pp. 469-480.

Under wartime difficulties of obtaining information, the Report does not claim to give a complete account of German exploitation of foreign labour. It attempts merely to set forth the evidence at present available. Wherever possible, it is based on direct German sources. These include official publications, such as the handbook for the guidance of German public employees dealing with foreign workers; the official gazettes in which legislation was published, and the publications of the Reich Ministry of Labour, the Office of the Four-Year Plan, the Office of the Commissioner-General for Manpower, the German Labour Front, the occupation authorities, and other German agencies. Wide use has been made of German periodicals and newspapers, all, of course, published under Government auspices or Government control. Direct access has not, however, always been possible to all these German publications which, in such cases, have been consulted at second hand through quotations in the press, or other publications, of neutral countries. Another source has been the information offices of Governments of the United Nations, several of which published bulletins containing direct evidence and reproducing original documents. Information was also supplied directly to the International Labour Office, after the liberation of Belgium, France and Luxembourg, by the Governments of those countries. Some evidence has been derived from the publications of international workers' organisations. Lastly, the Office has availed itself of its own branch offices, and of its correspondents in various allied and neutral countries.

The German sources have been used with due caution. German publications, needless to say, do not tell the whole story, and, naturally, attempt to conceal some issues and to place the situation in general in a favourable light. Under wartime conditions there are, moreover, inevitable gaps in the available information. The Office is also aware that, in spite of careful checking, there may be errors of omission or commission. It is hoped, however, that a sufficient body of evidence has been assembled to prove of immediate practical value.

The study has been prepared by Mr. John H. E. Fried, a member of the staff of the International Labour Office.

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*ERRATUM*

Page 1, footnote 1. For “Chapter XVI” read  
“Appendix VIII”.

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## CHAPTER I

### GERMAN WAR LABOUR POLICY

The outstanding aspect of German labour policy during the Second World War has been its contradictory character. It has combined the extreme features of an economy of scarcity, with the extreme features of a system of waste. Waste was continually enhanced by scarcity, while scarcity was continually aggravated by waste.

This paradox applies particularly to the intricate system built up by the Third Reich for the exploitation of other countries' manpower. By military or political domination over ever larger parts of Europe, Germany for several years acquired mastery over millions of non-German workers. It decided to use them for its war needs; which meant, in the great majority of cases, for war against their own countries. In the attempt to remedy the scarcity of German labour, foreign labour, seemingly inexhaustible, was wastefully employed. Methods of deliberate ruthlessness and coercion were applied on a large scale to non-Germans, and there was general disregard of human life. But these measures only served to increase the waste, and to aggravate the scarcity, of German manpower; the cumulative result of persistent compulsion was to require still greater supervision and repression of the foreign labour recruits.

In addition to coercion, Germany also employed modern scientific methods of mass administration, mass organisation and mass propaganda. These methods, however, were always combined with, and influenced by, the system of physical regimentation. The underlying truth was that all these measures were directed towards compelling conquered peoples to work for their conqueror's war effort—a practice long prohibited by international law<sup>1</sup>, and bound moreover to engender grave difficulties.

For these reasons, the wartime administration of foreign manpower in the Reich, as well as in the German-controlled parts of Europe, came to differ widely not only from peacetime economy, but also, and fundamentally, from the war economy of Germany's

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<sup>1</sup> See Chapter XVI.

opponents. The major Powers engaged in the war were faced, it is true, with many manpower problems; but measures which in a non-National-Socialist atmosphere might not have been obnoxious or might even have eased the lot of labour recruits, must be judged, in the case of Germany, against a background of ubiquitous fear and general insecurity.

The same background must be borne in mind in considering the various incentives used to support the system of coercion, which, to the disappointment of the Germans, remained mainly ineffective, because they were outweighed by restrictions and deprivations.

Yet another difficulty in forming a true picture lies in the fact that the official German sources which form the basis of the present report often disguise the stark realities of German labour policy in orthodox legal and economic terminology. The exploitation of non-German manpower was thus squeezed into the categories of conventional labour relations and labour law. But the nomenclature created to describe normal industrial relations is not fitted to describe the schemes applied by Germany to millions of non-German workers during the war. To take an example at random: it was largely a fiction to speak of a "labour contract" between the Todt Organisation and a Norwegian or a Frenchman who, against his will, was compelled to build fortifications for the German army.

### GERMANY'S NEED OF MANPOWER

Labour became scarce in Germany even before the start of military hostilities. In 1938, at the height of the German preparations for war, the available labour reserve did not suffice to supply the workers needed to build the "West Wall" fortifications. Hence, in June 1938, Reich Marshal Hermann Göring, in his capacity as Commissioner for the Four-Year Plan, introduced compulsory labour mobilisation, requiring every German citizen<sup>1</sup>, regardless

<sup>1</sup> Order of 22 June 1938. Subsequently, the Order of 13 February 1939 extended compulsory labour mobilisation to all persons on German territory, regardless of nationality. Cf. *International Labour Review*, Vol. XLI, No. 6, June 1940, pp. 590-592; Vol. XLIV, No. 6, Dec. 1941, pp. 633-637; INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE: *Labour Supply and National Defence*, Studies and Reports, Series C, No. 23 (Montreal, 1941), pp. 164-166.

Compulsory labour mobilisation was introduced by Hermann Göring after the European crisis resulting from the German demands on Czechoslovakia. Compulsory labour mobilisation (*Dienstverpflichtung*) must be distinguished from compulsory labour service (*Arbeitsdienstpflicht* or *Reichsarbeitsdienst*). The latter was introduced in June 1935, for German boys and girls only. It was used partly to furnish cheap labour for the building of strategic roads and for German agriculture, and partly for a thinly veiled pre-military training; cf. INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE: *Legislative Series*, 1935, Ger. 8.

of professional or social status, to accept any work or to undergo any training to which he was assigned by the authorities.

Compulsory labour mobilisation was intended to hasten the completion of the "West Wall". The labour offices ordered 400,000 German workers to leave their jobs and allotted them instead to undertakings connected with this "biggest fortification construction of all time". After the outbreak of war, Walter Stothfang, Personal Assistant to the State Secretary, Dr. Syrup, in the Reich Ministry of Labour, wrote:

Today, when the enemy pack once more assaults us, to prevent Germany's resurrection and to enslave us for all time, we know what the West Wall means to us. But, we must remember that it was possible to provide the labour force needed for this enormous construction project only through the Government's deliberate action, for free reserves of manpower had long ceased to exist.<sup>1</sup>

Yet, after the "West Wall" was finished, it was found that compulsory labour mobilisation had to be continued in order to hasten other huge projects connected with the last stages of German war preparation, for example, the construction of additional factories for the hydration of coal<sup>2</sup>; and this despite the fact that compulsory labour mobilisation was so unpopular in Germany that discontent with this *ultima ratio* of labour administration was officially acknowledged.<sup>3</sup>

By the end of 1938, Dr. Friedrich Syrup, State Secretary in the Reich Ministry of Labour, estimated the need for additional manpower at one million (25 per cent. for agriculture and 75 per cent. for industry).<sup>4</sup>

During the ensuing months, increasingly severe regulations prohibited change of occupation and of place of employment; one such regulation, for example, was issued on the day that the German troops marched into Prague.<sup>5</sup> The tightening of the labour regulations created such serious discontent that the labour offices were expressly directed not to apply them "obstinately, as if they were prohibitions".<sup>6</sup>

In fact, from the outset of the régime in 1933, the National Socialist authorities established, and continued to intensify, a

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Walter STOTHFANG: "Der Arbeitseinsatz im Kriege", in *Schriften für Politik und Auslandskunde* (Berlin, Junker and Dünhaupt, 1940), p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> F. WILLECKE: *Jahrbücher für Nationalökonomie und Statistik*, Sept. 1941, p. 315.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Walter STOTHFANG, *loc. cit.*, p. 21; F. WILLECKE, *op. cit.*

<sup>4</sup> Dr. F. SYRUP: "Die Etappen des Arbeitseinsatzes", in *Soziale Praxis*, 1939, p. 14.

<sup>5</sup> Decree of Reich Minister of Labour, 15 March 1939; *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, Part I, p. 141.

<sup>6</sup> Walter STOTHFANG: "Freiheit und Bindung im Arbeitseinsatz", in *Der Vierjahresplan*, 1941, p. 314.

system of regimentation for every aspect of labour. The nearer the Reich came to the end of its war preparations, the more were the rights of German workers curtailed, in order to keep up the feverish tempo of armament.

Later, it was officially acknowledged that the régime had, from the outset, built up its special system of labour allocation (*Arbeitseinsatz*) as a prerequisite of German rearmament. While the branch of the administration concerned (*Arbeitseinsatzverwaltung*) "assumed ever-increasing tasks and had to bear ever-increasing responsibilities, details about these activities had to be kept *as secret as those which related to German rearmament itself*".<sup>1</sup>

This policy derives from the experiences of the First World War. In 1916, General Ludendorff could not get his German manpower mobilisation programme accepted, because of the opposition of the German trade unions. The National Socialists considered it essential to prevent a repetition of such events in another war:

After the negative experiences of the last war Germany has realised the importance of the mobilisation of labour in modern warfare. This time, fortunately, it has neglected nothing in this direction.<sup>2</sup>

In short, to enable the Third Reich to prepare for war, the rights of labour, as guaranteed by the Weimar Constitution of 1919, had to be systematically abolished and a system of ever-increasing coercion had to be introduced in their stead.

And yet, in spite of the ruthless execution of National Socialist schemes (which were to silence all opposition from the workers) and in spite of the enormous conquests made by the Third Reich early in the war (which were to make Germany economically self-sufficient and impregnable, and to provide its war machine with almost unlimited loot) manpower shortage remained one of Germany's most pressing wartime problems.

This is a rather remarkable fact. During the First World War, Germany's shortage of food was much more critical, and increased more quickly than the shortage of manpower. During the Second World War, the situation was different. The "New Order" has been more successful during the war in providing food for Greater Germany than in providing sufficient manpower.

Even before the war there was a tendency towards declining productivity in German economy, when it was working under the restrictions imposed by the National Socialist programme of au-

<sup>1</sup> Fritz Sauckel, at the first congress of officials of the Labour Allocation Administration of Greater Germany, Weimar, 10-11 September 1942 (quoted in *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 27, 25 Sept. 1942, Part V, p. 499) (italics added).

<sup>2</sup> Walter STOTHFANG, in *Hamburger Fremdenblatt*, 4 Mar. 1944.

tarky; and even then, efforts were made to offset this declining productivity by increasing the number of workers. The tendency was intensified under the impact of the war. Germany's raw material problems were met by transforming them into labour problems.

German war economy needed, on the average, more human labour for the output of one unit than the war economy of other highly industrialised countries. This was due neither to a general inferiority of the German productive system nor to a lower productivity per man-hour of the German worker as compared with other European workers. Its causes were the following:

(1) The lack of a sufficient supply of certain strategic raw materials compelled Germany to rely largely on substitutes; and to produce substitutes meant the use of more labour than to produce the original raw material.

(2) The structure of the National-Socialist régime deprived the economy of very large numbers of able-bodied potential workers who had to be employed instead in the Gestapo and other special branches of the police system, in the Party organisations, the labour administration service, the German Labour Front, the factory guards, etc. This huge supervisory machine had in turn to be supplied with adequate clerical staff, with arms and technical appliances, with special communication and transportation facilities, etc.

(3) Germany's essential war industries and agriculture relied heavily on foreign workers who, in the great majority, were forcibly recruited and were kept in line by a machinery of coercion; which meant that a considerable additional number of able-bodied German men were used in unproductive positions as overseers of various kinds.

It must also be remembered that, besides the use of foreigners, other emergency wartime measures were introduced in Germany on a large scale, such as the rationalisation and simplification of manufacturing processes in order to save skilled manpower, to facilitate the interchangeability of war contracts between the various factories, and to offset the dislocation caused by bombing; the centralised distribution of orders; the concentration of industry through the closing down of less efficient plants; and, in the later stages of the war, a gradual and increasing elimination of all non-essential activities and professions—a programme which changed fundamentally the whole structure of German society, economy, consumption habits and living standards.

Yet the great need of industrial and agricultural manpower

made the mass importation of foreign workers one of the most urgent tasks of the German wartime administration. In importance it ranked as high as, and in the long run perhaps even higher than, the other spoils of German conquest. When the outlook was already dark, in the spring of 1944, the German public was still being told that "the economic strength of Germany and her allies lies in her wealth of *productive human beings*, which by far surpasses the manpower reserves at the disposal of England and North America for immediate armament production".<sup>1</sup>

### AN EMERGENCY SYSTEM

According to official German reports, the policy of exploiting military conquests for the forced deportation of foreign labour started as far as back as the campaign against Poland in September 1939. Labour recruiting agents, whose task was to round up Polish workers and transport them to Germany, followed "on the heels" of the German troops. Later, although the methods were not always those used in Poland, every new conquest and every further extension of German domination was followed by a systematic and large-scale utilisation of foreign manpower.

This policy was in line with the National Socialist doctrine of total warfare. On the other hand, the magnitude of the scheme had not been foreseen and created, even among the German authorities, much uneasiness, which increased as the war proceeded.

The number of foreign workers who at present [October 1943] are employed in German factories, plants, and shops goes beyond anything that was known before and beyond anything that was planned at the beginning of the war. An army of millions of Europeans of all nationalities has made its entry into the Reich. . . This development, in the midst of the most serious of all wars, created a problem which subjected the inner stability of the Reich to a very severe test—a test well nigh as severe as that endured on the battlefields. . . It goes without saying that the dangers from this employment of foreigners grew in proportion as the Reich was forced to meet new and grave military difficulties.

To have masses of foreigners in the Reich while it is threatened from all sides, is a gamble.<sup>2</sup>

Throughout the war, alien manpower was an unwieldy instrument in the hands of the German régime. Wartime utilisation of foreign labour never ran smoothly; it could be developed only in a makeshift fashion. Whether or not Germany had entered the war with a master plan for the importation or for the centralised ad-

<sup>1</sup> Editorial in *Deutsche Bergwerks-Zeitung* (May Day edition), 30 Apr. 1944 (italics in original).

<sup>2</sup> *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, 31 Oct. 1943.

ministration of conquered manpower, the actual course of events was never entirely foreseen by the German authorities themselves.

The empiric manner in which foreign labour was used was frequently emphasised by official German spokesmen. For example:

The course of the war has forced Germany to adopt measures in the field of labour allocation which have become more stringent from year to year. It is true that the uncertainty regarding the nature of the measures that would become necessary at any given time and the extent to which the measures would be necessary *made it impossible to plan much ahead*. Germany was forced increasingly to develop a careful system "of expedients" in order to master the tasks which came up in great variety and in such large numbers. Therefore the German Administration of Labour Allocation has been taught to be flexible and adaptable and it cannot be denied that very strong tension exists in this branch of the administration.<sup>1</sup>

In a similar vein, another German authority on labour questions<sup>2</sup> observed that, in dealing with foreign labour, it was possible only in exceptional cases to issue regulations of a fairly permanent character, even for parts of the Reich territory itself. "The various problems which arose had almost always to be settled in an *ad hoc* manner." (He added that only a quieter post-war period would provide the necessary opportunity to create a simplified labour code for foreigners volunteering for work in Germany.)

#### APPLICATION OF POLITICAL AND RACIAL DOCTRINES

The political and racial doctrines of the régime, as well as considerations of military security, militated against large-scale importation of foreign civilians into Germany for any length of time. The aim of National Socialist policy before the war had been to remove from German territory all persons and groups which National Socialist political and racial doctrines considered non-German, and to limit to an absolute minimum the migration into Germany of persons who were not considered desirable from a racial or a political standpoint. When millions of aliens who were not even familiar with the German language were living and working in all parts of Germany, and when almost every German factory and every German farm became a meeting-place for many nationalities and languages<sup>3</sup>, one of the fundamental war aims of National Socialist Germany was invalidated, namely, "to establish clearer racial boundaries".<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Walter STOTHEFANG, in *Soziale Praxis*, Mar. 1943, p. 95 (italics added).

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Werner MANSFELD, in *Deutsches Arbeitsrecht*, Feb. 1943, p. 23.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Arbeitseinsatz und Arbeitslosenhilfe*, No. 3-4, 1943, p. 19.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Adolf Hitler's speech in the Reichstag on 6 October 1939.



During the war it was not possible to reconcile the national and racial doctrines of national socialism with the need for an enormous influx of aliens. Many official statements reveal resentment at this necessity. As German armament factories, German industrial cities and the German countryside resounded more and more with foreign tongues, the authorities assumed a somewhat apologetic attitude—apologetic, that is to say, not to the foreigners, but to Germans.

The dilemma was by no means theoretical only; it had far-reaching practical results. It was in fact largely responsible for the plight of the aliens recruited for work in Germany and German-occupied territory, for the régime tried to uphold its racial and political doctrines by methodically harsh treatment of the foreigners.

They were debarred from exercising their basic political rights, and they had no say in the choice of the officials who exercised practically unlimited power over their own and their families' existence. With few exceptions, foreign workers were deprived of the basic civil rights of free men: they were deprived of the right to move freely or to choose their place of residence; to live in a household with their families; to rear and educate their children; to marry; to visit public places of their own choosing; to negotiate, either individually, or through representatives of their own choice, the conditions of their own employment; to organise in trade unions; to exercise free speech or other free expression of opinion; to gather in peaceful assembly; and they were frequently deprived of the right to worship according to their own conscience.

To satisfy National Socialist racial doctrines, emphasis was constantly placed on the necessity of segregating foreigners and discriminating against them, particularly in the case of members of nations and races considered as inferior. Although the realities of industrial, agricultural and other work made it impossible to keep foreigners and Germans apart, the policy of segregation and discrimination entailed much suffering and hardship. Foreign workers were transported in mass transports, lodged in mass lodging places, fed in mass canteens, supervised during work and after, and were able to enjoy hardly any private life.

One of the most serious results of the National Socialist system of recruitment and deportation of workers was the deliberate breaking up of family life. German labour drives were not limited to unmarried persons nor to families without young children. Only in a very few cases were husband and wife taken to the same destination. As a rule, for a married male worker, deportation to Germany meant prolonged separation, of indefinite duration, from his wife,

or, for a married woman, from her husband. Similarly, boys and girls recruited for labour in Germany were indiscriminately separated from their parents. Conditions were perhaps even worse for families whose children were too small to be recruited. Only in very exceptional cases were small children allowed to join their fathers or mothers who were going to Germany; as a rule, children had to be left behind. In the Government-General<sup>1</sup> in Poland the German authorities prohibited recruited women from taking their children with them, even if the women were destined, not for Germany, but for German-controlled work in another region of the Government-General.

After the members of a family were once separated, they frequently lost trace of one another, owing to the dislocation and difficulties caused, not only by administrative action, but also by military operations.

Underground reports reveal that adults and children often made desperate, but vain, efforts to avoid separation. The Germans used physical force and are reported to have shot women trying to keep their children.

What was the fate of the children left behind? From available reports, it appears that this depended on the policy pursued by the Germans in the particular area. If the area was destined to be "resettled" by "racially German" settlers, the children, together with those adults who on account of age or sickness were not deported for work, were regularly transported to other regions, under most trying circumstances. In other cases Polish children were removed to special German orphanages and training camps. There various systematic efforts were made to germanise them. This germanisation process was in the hands of specially selected German primary school teachers, students from German universities and representatives of Party organisations such as the Hitler Youth and the League of German Girls. Finally, in many areas the children were left to themselves, or forced to work in special squads in the construction or other services. Reports from the western provinces of Poland also reveal that boys and girls between the ages of 10 and 14 were sometimes forced to work in German munition plants.

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While Germany's utilisation of foreign manpower in some respects ran counter to National Socialist doctrines, it was further

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<sup>1</sup> For German wartime administration of the occupied Eastern territories, see Appendix I.

complicated by the fact that the German authorities combined with it the fostering of long-run German war aims. It is true that Germany's wartime policy in the occupied and dominated territories aimed, first of all, at increasing the war potential. But the determination to put more distant "racial" war aims into practice was so strong that it prevented rational utilisation of the manpower supply.

For example, the transplanting of hundreds of thousands of so-called *Volks* Germans in the midst of war added greatly to the difficulties of German administration in the eastern territories, since this policy involved the expulsion of millions of the former inhabitants of the territories to be resettled by Germans.<sup>1</sup> The policy followed in dealing with Jews was similarly dictated by racial doctrines. Jews were, at first, put into labour gangs. But during the later phases of the war the National Socialist authorities decided that the physical reduction of the number of European Jews was more important than the utilisation of their labour.<sup>2</sup>

Another illustration is the importation of children for work in Germany or German-occupied territory. The employment, not only of juveniles of various nationalities of 14 years of age, but of much younger "Eastern" children, has been reported again and again by neutral observers. It appears that they were mostly used for work on railways and road-building and in mining and agriculture. Until the later stages of the war, German sources did not mention this fact. On 26 March 1944, however, the Commissioner-General for Manpower issued a new Order concerning working conditions of "Eastern" workers employed in Germany. This Order contains a direct reference to children under 14 years: "In so far as juvenile Eastern workers under 14 years of age are put to work they shall receive 40 to 90 per cent. of the wages of other 14-year-old foreign workers. Within these limits, the wage shall be determined according to the output of the individual juvenile Eastern workers."<sup>3</sup> Provision was thus specifically made

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<sup>1</sup> In the summer of 1942 a vast scheme was elaborated for the mass migration of some 3 million Netherlands to colonise the German-occupied Soviet territories. Cf. Eugene M. KULISCHER: *The Displacement of Population in Europe*, Studies and Reports, Series O, No. 8 (International Labour Office, Montreal, 1943), p. 66: "A great deal of propaganda has been spent on promoting this scheme. The Germans stressed that, next to Belgium, the Netherlands was the most densely populated area in western Europe; that the country urgently needed a wider basis for its food supply; and that the waste regions of the east would 'compensate the Dutch for the colonies they have lost forever'. . . To organise settlement in the east, the Netherlands East Company was created."

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix II.

<sup>3</sup> Article 3, para. 8, of Order by the Commissioner-General for Manpower, of 26 March 1944; *Reichsgesetzblatt* 2, No. 14, 5 Apr. 1944, Part I, p. 71.

for "Eastern" children who produced as little as 40 per cent. of the output of a 14-year-old non-"Eastern" child (the Order probably referred to 14-year-old labour recruits from south-eastern Europe).

In the eastern territories, Germany's large-scale deportation of workers was accompanied by unparalleled measures of large-scale extermination. After the Soviet armies reconquered the invaded territories, official investigating committees were set up to establish evidence about the German occupation. The statements issued by these committees give a shocking picture of the mass executions carried out by the Germans.<sup>1</sup>

According to the testimony of witnesses which the Executive Office of the President (of the United States of America), War Refugee Board, declared in November 1944 to "be considered as entirely credible" and to "tally with all the trustworthy yet fragmentary reports hitherto received",

it is a fact beyond denial that the Germans have deliberately and systematically murdered millions of innocent civilians—Jews and Christians alike—all over Europe. . . . So revolting and diabolical are the German atrocities that the minds of civilised people find it difficult to believe that they have actually taken place. But the Governments of the United States and of other countries have evidence which clearly substantiates the facts.<sup>2</sup>

This policy of systematic destruction of potential manpower can only be explained by a determination on the part of the National Socialist authorities to carry out their geopolitical doctrines without regard for the consequences to their own war effort.<sup>3</sup>

During the later phases of the war, the ultimate political aims of the deportation of foreign labour became even more obvious. For example, throughout the German retreat in the Soviet Union and Poland, masses of inhabitants were taken towards the Reich with little consideration for their working ability. In the autumn and winter of 1944 the same policy was followed in the Netherlands and elsewhere. These deportations were clearly aimed, not so much at strengthening the momentary manpower situation in Germany, as at weakening the future manpower situation of its enemies.

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<sup>1</sup> See *Information Bulletins* of the Embassy of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Washington, D.C., 11 May 1944, pp. 3 *et seq.*, 2 Dec. 1944, p. 7, 18 Jan. 1945, p. 1, and 1 Feb. 1945, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Executive Office of the President, War Refugee Board, Washington, D.C., mimeographed report on *German Extermination Camps*, Nov. 1944, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> The report by the Executive Office of the President states: "This campaign of terror and brutality, which is unprecedented in all history and which even now continues unabated, is part of the German plan to subjugate the free peoples of the world".

## THE RESULTS OF THE EXPERIMENT

By mid-1940 Germany (including its allies) had under its domination a territory containing a population of approximately 225 millions. Within one year this figure rose, through the conquest of the Balkans, to approximately 285 millions. At the height of its penetration into the Soviet Union, Germany dominated a territory containing approximately 355 million persons. Together with the territories and populations, Germany won the plants, productive equipment and all the raw material which had not been destroyed by its opponents during their temporary retreat, and it made the most determined efforts to harness to its own war economy the enormous reserve of productive capacity of the conquered or politically dominated countries.

The policy of forced importation of labour obtained some measure of success. As the war proceeded, the proportion of foreign to German workers in the German armament industries rose to 1:3 and 1:2, and finally, in many places to 1:1, until the number of foreigners often exceeded the number of Germans.<sup>1</sup> In many agricultural regions of Germany, all work had to be done by German women, prisoners of war and foreign labour recruits. Outside the German borders, many labour gangs of the Todt Organisation consisted entirely of conscripted non-German workers, controlled by small German staffs. There must also be added, of course, the foreign manpower outside the frontiers of Greater Germany which produced industrial and agricultural output for the war machine. There can be no doubt that without the utilisation of millions of foreign workers Germany would not have been able to carry on the war so long.

But in war it is the final result that counts. Viewed, as it must be, in perspective, this gigantic experiment did not provide a solution of the German labour shortage problem. It was a partial solution; but in spite of continuous importation of foreign workers and in spite of Germany's success, for several years, in harnessing almost the whole of Europe to its war effort, the manpower shortage became increasingly critical as the war proceeded.

The systematic use of propaganda and inducements, and the fostering of social and national antagonisms produced some effect in the course of years. With so many persons involved, even a small percentage of collaborators had some numerical importance, and the

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<sup>1</sup> A German-dominated Austrian paper of 20 September 1944 stated that in Austrian arms and war production factories the proportion of foreign workers amounted to 80 per cent. (It must be noted that Austrian workers are not considered as foreign workers.) At about the same time, Goebbels' organ *Das Reich* spoke of factories in the Reich 90 per cent. of whose workers were foreigners.

German authorities saw to it that foreign collaborators were rewarded with positions in which they could best exercise their influence.

But this small degree of collaboration pales before the courage, the patriotism and, above all, the resourcefulness with which the huge majority resisted the German manpower drives and with which the labour recruits, once in Germany, contrived to minimise the efficiency of the programme.

Throughout Europe, the conscription of labour, however much combined with inducements and propaganda, led to resistance. To their best ability, and often at the cost of their lives, the conscripts and their families resisted participation in German war work. But for their efforts, the wartime labour policy of the Third Reich might have had far other results and, indeed, the war itself might have taken a different course.

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## CHAPTER II

### ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS

German administrative machinery for the regulation of labour questions reflected the outstanding importance which the National Socialists attached to the subject. The system was intricate and the administrative "overhead" high. The need for continuous co-ordination among the three branches of the Government, namely, the Party, the bureaucracy and the armed forces, was bound to complicate still further the manifold problems of wartime labour policy.

In the main the measures concerning labour were shaped and executed by the following agencies and authorities, whose jurisdiction frequently overlapped.

#### AGENCIES AND AUTHORITIES

From the beginning of the war the overall direction of Germany's policy was entrusted to the Reich Defence Council, or *War Cabinet* (*Ministerrat für die Reichsverteidigung*), which was concerned not only with executive functions at the highest level but with policy making and full legislative functions as well.

Of the seven men composing the War Cabinet, at least four were directly concerned with the question of manpower supply: Reich Marshal Göring, the Chairman, who, as Commissioner for the Four-Year Plan, was the highest authority on questions of labour distribution; the Minister of the Interior, Frick (later Himmler), in his capacity as Commissioner-General of National Administration; Todt (after his death, Speer), the Minister for Armament and Munitions and Commissioner-General for War Production, with his broad powers over all matters of war production; and last, but not least, Field Marshal Keitel, who voiced the needs of the armed forces, both for manpower and for war production.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The remaining members of the War Cabinet were Bormann, Chief of the highest Party organ, the Chancellery of the National Socialist Party; Funke, Reich Minister of Economic Affairs and Commissioner-General for all matters concerning economics; and Lammers, Chief of Staff of the Reich Chancellery, representing the Führer.

The *Reich Ministry of Labour* was the highest federal agency in the field of labour administration.<sup>1</sup> Until the appointment of the Commissioner-General for Manpower it was, together with the Four-Year Plan Organisation<sup>2</sup>, in "central command" of the continent-wide system of labour recruitment and allocation. But even after the appointment of the Commissioner-General for Manpower, the Reich Ministry of Labour was the chief centre for the preparation of labour legislation and frequently negotiated with foreign authorities for the importation of labour. It also acted as co-ordinator between the various government departments and central Party agencies dealing with manpower questions. Lastly, it remained the supreme authority on questions of labour protection (safety, factory inspection, supervision of undertakings and working conditions), and of the various branches of social insurance.

The *Wehrmacht* had an important and often decisive voice in all matters concerning German war economy and, in particular, manpower problems. In addition to Field Marshal Keitel's position in the War Cabinet, the *Wehrmacht* exercised legislative and administrative authority over labour questions in various German-occupied territories, in many cases for several years.<sup>3</sup>

At times there was considerable friction between the military agencies, which wanted to keep as many civilian foreign workers

<sup>1</sup> In order to secure the greatest efficiency in this branch of Federal administration, the National Socialist régime from 1939 onwards took the precaution of centralising the labour administration of the various German States; only Prussia continued to have a civil service of its own. Since, however, Reich Marshal Göring held the post of Prussian Prime Minister, there seems to have been little difficulty in co-ordinating the activities of the Federal and of the Prussian administrations.

<sup>2</sup> When the first Four-Year Plan Organisation was created on 18 October 1936, the Ministry of Labour lost some of its jurisdiction over questions concerning the planned distribution of manpower and war policy. On 18 October 1940 the Four-Year Plan Organisation was extended for another four years.

<sup>3</sup> For example, in Belgium and northern France there was very close collaboration between the German Military Command and the labour offices (recruitment centres) throughout the German occupation. Summons for labour recruits were issued partly by the *Oberfeldkommandatur* or *Feldkommandatur* and partly by the labour offices. The military authorities also issued binding instructions to the labour offices in Belgium (e.g., the Orders of the Chief of Military Administration of the Military Command for Belgium and Northern France, promulgated in the *Verordnungsblatt des Militärbefehlshabers in Belgien und Nordfrankreich*). It is interesting to note that this official gazette of the German military occupation authorities bore on the title page of every issue the notice: "Reprinting—even in parts—prohibited. Exceptions must be authorised by the Chief of the Military Administration".

In the East, the occupied territories outside the battle area, particularly the district of Bialystok, were, until July 1941, that is, for almost two years, under military administration. After the war against the Soviet Union had started Adolf Hitler decreed on 17 July 1941 that the administration should be handed over to the civilian occupation authorities (*Kommentar zur Reichsverteidigungsgesetzgebung*, Vol. 2, Part 4; *Reichswirtschaftshilfe*, Allg. IV, "Bialystok", p. 15, 9th supplement).



and as many prisoners of war as possible near the front or, in general, in the outlying regions, for the construction of defence works, etc., and the recruitment offices, which were under strong pressure to send more and more workers to back areas.<sup>1</sup>

The post of *Commissioner-General for Manpower* was created by Adolf Hitler in March 1942. In view of the outstanding role he and his organisation were to play, a more extensive description of his activities is given below.<sup>2</sup>

The jurisdiction of two central administrative agencies, the *Reich Ministry of Economic Affairs* and the *Reich Ministry of Armament and Munitions*, sometimes tended to overlap. Both supervised and controlled wartime production. The longer the war lasted, the more the power of the second increased, largely at the expense of the former, but partly at the expense of the Reich Ministry of Labour and the Labour Allocation Administration.

Until the great bombing attacks on Hamburg in July 1943, the Reich Ministry of Economic Affairs still controlled approximately 95,000 industrial establishments, whereas the Reich Ministry of Armament and Munitions had approximately 90,000 factories under its control. After that time there was a significant change, and the second Ministry extended its control more and more.<sup>3</sup>

Its position was particularly strengthened by the fact that its head was also head of the vast Todt Organisation.<sup>4</sup>

The *governors of occupied territories* were appointed by, and directly responsible to, the Führer. They were endowed with the widest legislative and executive power over the populations of their territories.

In territories where *puppet Governments* were established, the rules and regulations concerning labour conscription and the despatch of native workers to Germany, or elsewhere, had frequently to be issued jointly by the German and the puppet Governments.

<sup>1</sup> The German military authorities in the occupied and dominated territories frequently asked the S.S. to carry out police measures. In the winter of 1943, for example, when strikes and manifestations had broken out in the German-controlled armament factories of Turin, the Supreme Command of the *Wehrmacht* in Italy asked S.S. General Zimmermann to restore order. The S.S. General issued the following proclamation:

Working men and working women,

The Supreme Command of the *Wehrmacht* in Italy has sent me to Turin with orders to establish peace and order by every means and to give energetic assistance to the Italian authorities. . . I wish to make it clear that I have decided to act, with that promptness and ruthlessness which characterise the German *Wehrmacht*, against all those elements who are hostile to State authority and against all those who stay away from work.

(Quoted in *Gazetta del Popolo*, 2 Dec. 1943.)

<sup>2</sup> See p. 25.

<sup>3</sup> *Berliner Börsen-Zeitung*, 17 Oct. 1943.

<sup>4</sup> See Chapter VII.

At the least, the German authorities had to ensure that their orders were implemented by the puppet Governments.

However strong Germany's position in relation to *allied and satellite States*, it still needed their active support in counteracting opposition to German demands for manpower. Frequent negotiations, treaties and arrangements were therefore necessary to induce these Governments to enact and enforce legislation in support of German measures.

The *labour trustee system* (*Reichstreuhänder der Arbeit*), an invention of the National Socialist régime, was created on 19 May 1933, after Adolf Hitler had, in the same month, dissolved the employers' associations and the trade unions. The duty of the labour trustees was to determine authoritatively wages and working conditions, formerly settled by collective agreements negotiated between employers (or employers' associations) and trade unions. They had also to prevent industrial disputes, that is, to settle them on their own authority. Their powers were considerably extended by the National Socialist Labour Code of 1934<sup>1</sup>, and by the basic Wage Stop Order of 1938.<sup>2</sup> The latter gave them the "key position of guarantors of the wage freeze".<sup>3</sup> The labour trustees determined authoritatively and in detail for the various categories of workers hourly and piece rates, rules for the calculation of piece rates, rules for job classifications and other aspects of the official wage policy. These rules fill many pages of the official publications of the Reich Ministry of Labour. They were automatically binding on the respective industries and trades. No appeal against them was possible. In addition, within the framework of the regulations issued by the Reich Ministry of Labour and, from the spring of 1942, by the Commissioner-General for Manpower, the labour trustees issued such a countless number of orders and rules that they were described as "supreme umpires" in the sphere of industrial relations and economic questions.<sup>4</sup>

The *regional labour offices* acted as intermediaries between the central authorities and the network of local labour offices. Their main task was to instruct and supervise the labour offices in their particular region, and to advise them on the application of the orders and regulations issued by the higher authorities.

At the outbreak of war there were 13 regional labour offices in

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<sup>1</sup> Act of 20 January 1934; *Reichsgesetzblatt*, No. 7, 23 Jan. 1934, Part I, p. 45; INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE: *Legislative Series*, 1934, Ger. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Order of 25 June 1938; *Reichsgesetzblatt*, No. 99, 28 June 1938, Part I, p. 691; INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE: *Legislative Series*, 1938, Ger. 7 (B).

<sup>3</sup> "Zehn Jahre Reichstreuhänder der Arbeit", in *Die Deutsche Volkswirtschaft*, Vol. 12, first June issue, 1943, p. 504.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

the old Reich, and two branch offices of the Reich Ministry of Labour acting as regional labour offices for Austria and the Sudeten region respectively. The number of regional offices was later increased to 26 and finally to 42. Up to March 1939 the regional labour offices and the local labour offices were provincial (State) agencies. In March 1939, as part of the centralisation of labour administration, they were turned into Federal agencies.

The object of increasing the number of regional labour offices was to make them coincide with the 42 Party districts of Greater Germany (including Austria, the Sudeten region and the annexed part of Poland). This reorganisation was completed by the summer of 1943.<sup>1</sup>

During the war *local labour offices* were responsible for the enforcement of the rules and regulations concerning the distribution of workers, and, in some occupied territories, the recruitment of workers. Although the lowest agencies in the hierarchy of the wartime labour allocation system, they retained considerable freedom of decision. They were in constant touch with German employers, the German population in general, and foreign workers. Since the officials of the local labour offices had to make the actual decisions in practice, their power over the labour recruits was very considerable.

After the Polish campaign of 1939, there were more than 400 local labour offices. Their number increased with the conquest of more territories and many offices had branches and sub-branches attached to them.

That huge National Socialist organisation, the *German Labour Front*, which, in 1933, absorbed all the trade unions of the pre-Hitler era, was the régime's main instrument for the control of labour. Membership in it was compulsory for all employed persons, for employers and for self-employed persons and for members of families engaged in industrial or other activities. During the war,

<sup>1</sup> In February 1944 the names of the 42 regional labour offices, indicating their territorial jurisdiction, were as follows (the seats of the offices are given in brackets): East Prussia (Königsberg); Upper Silesia (Kattowitz); Lower Silesia (Breslau); Mark Brandenburg (Berlin); Berlin (Berlin); Pomerania (Stettin); Mecklenburg (Schwerin); Schleswig-Holstein (Kiel); Hamburg (Hamburg); Weser-Ems (Bremen); Eastern Hanover (Lüneburg); Southern Hanover-Brunswick (Hanover); Magdeburg-Anhalt (Magdeburg); Halle-Merseburg (Halle); Saxony (Dresden); Sudetenland (Reichenberg); Thuringia (Weimar and Erfurt); Kurhessen (Kassel); North Westphalia (Münster); South Westphalia (Dortmund); Essen (Essen); Düsseldorf (Düsseldorf); Cologne-Aachen (Köln-Lindenthal); Moselland (Koblenz); Westmark (Saarbrücken); Rhein-Main (Frankfurt); Baden (Strassbach); Württemberg (Stuttgart); Mainfranken (Würzburg); Franconia (Nuremberg); Bayreuth (Bayreuth); Munich-Upper Bavaria (Munich); Schwaben (Augsburg); Vienna (Vienna); Niederdonau (Vienna); Oberdonau (Linz); Tyrol-Vorarlberg (Innsbruck); Salzburg (Salzburg); Carinthia (Klagenfurt); Styria (Graz); Danzig-Western Prussia (Danzig); Warthegau (Posen). (Circular of 21 February 1944; *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 8-9, 25 Mar. 1944, Part I, pp. 108-9.)

its most important tasks were to supervise the various labour mobilisation schemes in Germany, the foreign workers inside Germany, as well as in large parts of German-occupied territory, and prisoners of war working for the German war effort.

The activities of the Labour Front, with its nation-wide network of officials, branches and sub-branches, and its cells in every undertaking, extended to every corner of the Reich. In every detail of the life and work of foreign workers, the influence of the ubiquitous Labour Front was directly felt.

From the summer of 1943, there existed a Central Inspectorate for foreign workers<sup>1</sup>, with the task of co-ordinating and facilitating the work of the German Labour Front as the organisation responsible for the supervision of labour. It was the duty of the Central Inspectorate to inspect factories and camps regularly in order to ensure that the instructions concerning the employment of foreign workers were being observed. For this purpose, the territory of the Reich was divided into fifteen inspection areas, with inspectors for each area.

As long as the military and political course of the war permitted, the German authorities sought the active collaboration of *pro-German labour organisations* in the countries of origin of foreign workers. The most important of these, until July 1943, were the Fascist syndicates and corporations of Italy. They were, in fact, continued, in a reorganised form, in the German-occupied Italian Fascist Republic, proclaimed after the events of July 1943. The Vichy Government made efforts to build up corporate organisations along similar lines. In several other occupied countries, e.g., Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark and Norway, collaborationists tried, with German support, to form "Labour Fronts" modelled upon the German Labour Front. Although all these efforts were failures, owing to the active and passive resistance of the workers of the countries concerned, the German authorities granted some degree of apparent autonomy to the leaders of these organisations, both in their home countries and in dealing with their fellow citizens employed in Germany.

This long list of the bodies concerned with labour questions would still be incomplete without mention of the complicated machinery of Government-controlled compulsory *organisations of*

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<sup>1</sup> The Central Inspectorate was created under an agreement concluded between Fritz Sauckel, Commissioner-General for Manpower, and Robert Ley, Leader of the German Labour Front, on 2 June 1943. In July 1943, Joseph Goebbels, Reich Minister of Propaganda, and Alfred Rosenberg, Reich Minister for the Occupied Eastern Territories, also became parties to the agreement. (*Deutsche Bergwerks-Zeitung*, 7 Oct. 1943. Cf. *International Labour Review*, Vol. XLIX, No. 6, June 1944, p. 680.)

employers, which formed the foundation of the National Socialist "corporative" structure.

The system was constructed along two lines, functional and territorial. Functionally, every German employer had to belong, according to his economic function or branch of activity, to one of the several Reich Groups (*Reichsgruppen*): Reich Group "Industry", Reich Group "Commerce", Reich Group "Banking", Reich Group "Insurance", Reich Group "Power" or Reich Group "Handicraft".

These main groups were variously subdivided. Reich Group "Industry", for example, which included all German manufacturers, was divided into seven main sections (*Hauptgruppen*). Each of these main sections included several economic sections (*Wirtschaftsgruppen*) which were in turn subdivided into several branch sections (*Fachgruppen*) and subsections (*Fachuntergruppen*).<sup>1</sup>

In agriculture, employers and independent farmers were organised, according to branches of production or processing, into ten main associations (*Hauptvereinigungen*). Each of them covered all undertakings concerned with agricultural products, from the production stage, through the processing stage, up to the distribution stage.<sup>2</sup>

Territorially, it was the task of the corporative organisation to co-ordinate, on three levels (Reich-wide, regionally and in the districts) the activities of the functional bodies described above. Over the territorial organisation of non-agricultural activities stood the Reich Economic Chamber (*Reichswirtschaftskammer*), including all undertakings belonging to the Reich Groups "Industry" and "Commerce", "Power", "Banking", "Insurance" and

<sup>1</sup> The seven main sections of Reich Group "Industry" comprised the following 32 economic sectors: *Main Section I*: mining; iron production; non-ferrous metal production; foundries; refineries. *Main Section II*: steel and iron construction; machine building; motor-car and vehicle manufacture; aircraft industry; electro-technical industry; precision instruments and optical industry. *Main Section III*: manufacture of iron and metal goods; manufacture of iron, steel, and tin goods; manufacture of metal goods. *Main Section IV*: stones and earth; building industry; wood-working industry; glass industry; ceramic industry; sawmills. *Main Section V*: chemical industry; paper, cardboard and cellulose manufacture; paper and printing industry; petroleum industry. *Main Section VI*: leather industry; textile industry; clothing industry. *Main Section VII*: foodstuffs industry; brewing; malting; sugar manufacture; alcohol distilleries.

<sup>2</sup> The main associations in agriculture were responsible for regulating the following branches of industry: (1) grain and fodder; (2) livestock; (3) milk, dairy products and all animal and vegetable fats; (4) potatoes; (5) sugar; (6) horticulture (including vegetables and fruits); (7) fish and fish products; (8) poultry and eggs; (9) hops and breweries; (10) viticulture.

In addition, within the framework of the Reich Food Estate (*Reichsnährstand*) there were several central associations controlling and regulating the activities, for example, of the margarine industry, the confectionery industry (including the jam industry) and flour mills.

"Handicrafts". On the lower levels, these functions were exercised by 42 (formerly 26) regional economic chambers (*Gauwirtschaftskammern*) and by approximately 200 chambers of industry and commerce, and chambers of artisans.

In agriculture, the counterpart of the chambers was the Reich Food Estate (*Reichsnährstand*), with subdivisions in the regions (*Gaue*), districts (*Kreise*) and localities (*Orte*), which were headed, respectively, by regional, district and local "farmers' leaders" (*Bauernschaftsführer*).<sup>1</sup>

Lastly, there were several Reich associations (*Reichsvereinigungen*) in industry, which were comparable to cartels. But in marked contrast to the "private" nature of cartels, which were independent of the Government, these associations were officially sponsored by the German Government and worked in close collaboration with the central administrative agencies.

It is impossible to define exactly the extent to which these corporate bodies were autonomous and the extent to which they were organs of the Government and the Party. They were very closely interdependent. The corporate bodies were moreover organised on the "leadership" principle, for the office holders—active members in the various branches of economic life—were appointed from the top downwards. It was thus certain that only men trusted by the authorities could hold appointments in the corporate system. The Reich Minister for Economic Affairs appointed the heads of the Reich Economic Chamber and of the Reich Groups and these heads in turn appointed the subordinate leaders. Similarly, in agriculture, the top appointments were made by the Reich Minister for Food and Agriculture, who also held the Party position of Reich Farmers' Leader. On the regional and local level, leading Party men were regularly appointed to posts in the official agricultural bodies.

The general function of the corporate organisations was to co-ordinate the economic life of the nation with the policy of the Government and Party and also to represent the interests of their members. The Government and Party agencies relied on the corporate organisations to fill in the details in their instructions and directions, and to exercise control over their member-undertakings. But the duties of the corporate associations went still further. During the war, they helped to shape both long-run and day-to-

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<sup>1</sup> It is noteworthy that the agricultural organisations extended their activities into the cities; occupations like butchers and bakers were under the jurisdiction of the Reich Food Estate. Food rationing in the cities was also largely entrusted to organs of the Reich Food Estate. The supervisory and regulatory activities of the Reich Food Estate had thus a direct influence on the life of foreign workers in Germany.

day decisions concerning priorities and distribution of labour and raw material supply, and concerning questions of production policy—two topics most vital to the foreign worker, because German labour recruitment policy abroad and the conditions of foreigners' employment in the Reich were largely dependent on the decisions reached regarding labour supply and production.

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It may well be wondered how so complicated a system could work efficiently. Close examination suggests that it was apparently workable for the following reasons:

(1) All agencies and office holders concerned with labour administration were agreed that scarcity of manpower was Germany's most crucial wartime problem and that they must continue to supply new contingents of workers to the essential war industries and agriculture, whatever the cost.

(2) All the authorities and bodies concerned with Germany's foreign manpower problems were united by a common political outlook. The few politically unreliable persons who had remained in the administrative branches dealing with labour questions were removed after the spring of 1942 by the personnel policy of the Commissioner-General for Manpower and by the repeated "combing-out" drives for military mobilisation.

(3) One of the characteristic developments of German wartime administration was the formation of "commissions" consisting of officials from different Government, Party, and army departments and from employers' organisations. "Combing-out commissions", for example, which inspected plants in order to determine their manpower needs and, primarily, to decide how many workers could be transferred to other plants, were composed of representatives of the Ministry of Armament and Munitions, the Ministry of Economic Affairs, the regional labour office, the military command of the district, and the Reich group or subgroup of the particular industry. The collaboration of these various interests, in these commissions on the spot, tended to decrease red tape and jurisdictional disputes.

(4) As early as 1 August 1939 the Reich Ministry of Labour, in order to adapt labour administration to the needs of the coming war, made the heads of the labour offices "deputies of the labour trustees". Later, the posts of labour trustees and of heads of regional labour offices were actually merged. The boundaries of the 26 and, later,

of the 42 regions into which the territory of Greater Germany was divided for the purposes of the Labour Trustee Organisation, were made to coincide with those of the regional labour offices. The 26 (later 42) labour trustees were also the heads of the labour offices of their districts (*Gaue*).

Furthermore, special labour trustees (*Sondertreuhänder der Arbeit*) with jurisdiction over the whole Reich (instead of over only one of the 26 or 42 regions) were appointed for certain occupational groups in which regional differences were of slight importance, such as public services, mining and construction, the Todt Organisation, and foreign workers.

(5) By Order of 16 November 1942, Reich Defence Commissioners were put in charge of the complete regional co-ordination of war economic policy, including manpower questions.<sup>1</sup>

The central authorities gave their orders to the regional authorities through the Reich Defence Commissioners, through whom the regional authorities also reported to the central agencies. The Commissioners' main task was to co-ordinate in their district the manpower requirements of war production and of essential civilian production with the recruitment needs of the armed forces.

(6) German wartime administration was characterised by extreme concentration of power at the top, but at the same time by a remarkable flexibility and decentralisation in the actual application of its economic and labour policies.

A leading German economic journal, *Die Deutsche Volkswirtschaft*<sup>2</sup>, wrote in December 1942:

After total control was achieved it became necessary to relax the bureaucratic rigidity. The Government has urged upon business uncongenial forms of State economy. . . planning measures were introduced piecemeal as they were expedient. This patchwork system led to confusion and orientation became ever more difficult.

As the *Frankfurter Zeitung* observed, on 27 July 1943, closer co-ordination was thus established between industry and the Government:

Initiative in directing business can be the more effective the more we decrease the directing machinery and the better we succeed in co-ordinating the attitude of leading businessmen with the requirements of national socialism.<sup>3</sup>

Government and industry became even more closely inter-

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<sup>1</sup> Order of 16 November 1942; *Reichsgesetzblatt* No. 117, 17 Nov. 1942, Part I, p. 649.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted by Heinz PAECHTER: "Recent Trends in the German Command Economy", in *Journal of Political Economy*, Sept. 1944, p. 225.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 221.



locked than before the war. To quote the *Frankfurter Zeitung* again (16 September 1942)<sup>1</sup>, in the big undertakings key positions were held by influential Party members:

The occupation of leading posts in business by National Socialists will contribute to lessen Government intervention because these men understand better the aims of national socialism. Many business firms have already opened opportunities to such personalities. . . It is deemed undesirable to appoint Party commissioners in the factories. However, the appointment of managing directors and vice-chairmen [of business corporations] is no longer considered a private unpolitical act. . . Repeatedly the Party has put leading officials, in particular civil servants, at the disposal of business.

The machinery of "self-government" sponsored by the National Socialist régime gave governmental powers to leading industrialists. Dr. Karl Lange, for example, director of an association of industrialists, acted as managing director of the Economic Group for Machine Building, as chairman of the Central Committee for "Machines in War Industry", as head of the Control Office of Engineering (an official organisation in charge of foreign trade) and as Deputy-General, with the functions of Reich Commissioner, for over-all planning in the machine-building trade.<sup>2</sup>

In addition, "central committees and pools" (*Hauptausschüsse und Ringe*) of industrial experts acted as liaison agencies between the industrial associations and the Government, especially the Reich Ministry for Armament and Munitions and the Reich Ministry for Economic Affairs.

Lastly, there was an amalgamation of political and economic functions in the highest organs of Government. For example, the Reich Armament Council, the policy-making body of the Ministry for Armament and Munitions, was composed of five generals and eight leading industrialists and managers.

In the field of labour relations, the cumulative effect of these arrangements was to leave considerable discretion in the hands of the firms and institutions which employed foreign workers. Thus to quite a large extent the treatment that the foreign worker received depended on the attitude of the German employer.

(7) The most important step for the increased utilisation of foreign manpower was, however, the appointment of Fritz Sauckel, *Gauleiter* of Thuringia, to the newly created post of Commissioner-General for Manpower, in March 1942. In a statement of his programme, he said that his administration "has entirely cast off any liberalistic-capitalistic reminiscences and is fanatically consecrated

<sup>1</sup> Heinz PAECHTER, *loc. cit.* p. 221.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 222.

to the philosophy of the Führer. . . We shall fulfil the glorious task which the Führer has set us as fanatical National Socialists."<sup>1</sup>

#### THE REORGANISATION OF LABOUR ADMINISTRATION IN MARCH 1942

When Adolf Hitler, after two and a half years of war, reorganised German war manpower administration by appointing one of his most trusted followers as Commissioner-General for Manpower, Germany's manpower position was critical. It is significant that the Decree was countersigned by Field Marshal Keitel, Chief of the Supreme Command of the *Wehrmacht*.<sup>2</sup> Speaking at the first congress of the officials of labour administration of Greater Germany (Weimar, 10-11 September 1942), State Secretary Körner, Sauckel's deputy, declared: "From the very start of the Four-Year Plan (in 1936), plants felt the lack of manpower. . . After the outbreak of war, new difficulties continually arose. It proved impossible to bridge the gaps in the production process, although use was made of millions of prisoners of war. When the war assumed an even more serious aspect and became a life-and-death struggle for the existence of the German people, the post of Commissioner-General for Manpower was created."<sup>3</sup> At the same congress, Dr. Timm, another of Sauckel's closest collaborators, admitted<sup>4</sup> that "early in 1942, there was considerable anxiety in Germany how to supply the necessary manpower even for the most vital production for the armed forces and for the agricultural needs of the nation".<sup>5</sup>

Fritz Sauckel explained the nature of his duties as follows: "The Führer has charged me with the task of replacing, *at whatever cost*, the German workers who have been called to the front for the world-wide fight."<sup>6</sup> As Commissioner-General for Manpower, Sauckel was to be the head of a centralised organisation for the recruitment, utilisation and distribution of labour. His main function was to ensure that German war economy, and especially all branches of the armament industry, received the manpower they required.

For this purpose he was given the widest powers. His only superior was Reich Marshal Göring, in his capacity as head of the Four-Year Plan. Reich Marshal Göring authorised Sauckel to

<sup>1</sup> *Arbeitseinsatz und Arbeitslosenhilfe*, Nos. 19-22, Oct.-Nov. 1942, pp. 148-149

<sup>2</sup> Decree of 21 March 1942; *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 15, Part I, p. 257.

<sup>3</sup> *Arbeitseinsatz und Arbeitslosenhilfe*, loc. cit., p. 146.

<sup>4</sup> *Die Deutsche Volkswirtschaft*, third February issue, 1943, p. 184.

<sup>5</sup> *Arbeitseinsatz und Arbeitslosenhilfe*, loc. cit., p. 155.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 146 (italics added).

issue new laws and to repeal old laws, subject to Göring's consent. He also delegated to the new Commissioner-General power to issue binding instructions to the staff of any branch of the German civil administration, to the National Socialist Party and all its affiliations, to the Reich Protector (the highest German official in Bohemia-Moravia), the Governor-General (the highest German authority in the part of Poland known as the Government-General), and to all military commanders and chiefs of the civil administrations (in the German-occupied territories), with only one proviso, that Sauckel must seek the consent of Göring before taking steps of "fundamental importance".<sup>1</sup>

It is to be noted that Sauckel was given these enormous powers over German and foreign workers alike. His organisation was made part of the organisation of the Reich Ministry of Labour. He took over a portion of the staff and machinery of the Reich Ministry of Labour, namely, the former "chief sections" III (Wages) and V (Allocation of Labour). Upon Sauckel's appointment, Reich Marshal Göring dissolved the Department for Labour Allocation, which had been part of his own organisation for the Four-Year Plan since October 1936, and had dealt with the distribution of manpower and the regulation of working conditions.<sup>2</sup> The central Reich Employment Office (*Reichsstelle für Arbeitsvermittlung*), the Provincial Labour Offices (*Landesarbeitsämter*), the Labour Offices (*Arbeitsämter*), the Reich Labour Trustees, the Special Labour Trustees, and the Delegates of the Reich Labour Trustees at the labour offices were all subordinated to Sauckel.<sup>3</sup>

The number of Sauckel's immediate collaborators was small. His personal "staff" consisted only of several "efficiency experts and Party members". It was "headed by his deputy, the Secretary of State of Thuringia, Party-Comrade Ortlepp. The special task of Ortlepp is to maintain liaison with all the highest agencies of the Government, the Party and the army."<sup>4</sup>

An Order of 16 January 1942<sup>5</sup>, issued only a few weeks before Sauckel's nomination, stipulated that Bormann, the head of the Party Chancellery, must be consulted before any statute, decree or order was issued by any Reich Ministry or any other of the

<sup>1</sup> Order by Reich Marshal Göring of 27 March 1942; *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 15, Part I, p. 257.

<sup>2</sup> Circular Order of 22 October 1936, quoted in Order of 27 March 1942; *Reichsgesetzblatt*, No. 40, 21 Apr. 1942, Part I, p. 180.

<sup>3</sup> There were at that time 26 Reich labour trustees in Greater Germany, plus three special labour trustees for the public services, the mining industry, and foreign workers respectively.

<sup>4</sup> Gauamtsleiter Oberregierungsrat W. ESCHER, in *Arbeitseinsatz und Arbeitslosenhilfe*, Vol. 19-22, 1942, p. 140.

<sup>5</sup> *Reichsgesetzblatt*, No. 6, 24 Jan. 1942, Part I, p. 35.

highest administrative agencies of the Reich and the States, or by the Reich governors. Bormann's Party Chancellery was also required to "co-operate" in all personnel questions concerning public employees and civil servants.

It may be assumed that these provisions scarcely acted as a check on Sauckel's activities. As an ardent Party member who had for many years enjoyed a prominent position in its highest ranks, he repeatedly emphasised that the German labour allocation administration must work in the closest touch with the National Socialist Party.

Sauckel also emphasised from the beginning the need for the utmost centralisation.<sup>1</sup> The process, begun earlier and defined as "the transition from the employment exchange to the governmentally-planned distribution of labour"<sup>2</sup>, was completed under Fritz Sauckel. He introduced or intensified the following features of German foreign manpower policy:

(1) In German-occupied territories and even in territories not militarily occupied, but politically dominated, by Germany, the pretence of "voluntary recruitment" was abandoned; the German labour recruitment agencies relied more and more on methods of direct physical compulsion. For this, the foreigners themselves were blamed: "The voluntary recruitment of labour has had less success of late, and repeated appeals to release older and weaker workers by a system of voluntary exchange did not have much success".<sup>3</sup>

(2) Manpower should be recruited for the German war effort not only in Germany and the German-occupied and German-dominated countries but in the "Allied, friendly and neutral States as well, according to the principle of European solidarity" (statement by Fritz Sauckel, 6 January 1943).<sup>4</sup>

(3) All available foreign manpower had to be allocated in such a way as to satisfy, primarily, the labour requirements of war economy within the Reich territory.

(4) In the occupied territories, labour (both native and imported) had to be allocated according to the following scale of urgency:

- (a) work for the German armed forces;
- (b) work for the German occupying authorities;
- (c) work for the German civilian authorities;
- (d) work for German armament contracts;

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<sup>1</sup> Order of 24 April 1942; *Reichsgesetzblatt*, No. 15, Part I, p. 258.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Werner MANSFELD, in *Deutsches Arbeitsrecht*, Jan. 1943, p. 11.

<sup>3</sup> *Brüsseler Zeitung*, 9 Oct. 1942.

<sup>4</sup> *Deutsches Nachrichten Bureau*, 7 Jan. 1943.

- (e) agriculture and food industry;
- (f) industrial work (other than (d)) for Germany;
- (g) only when all these requirements were met, could native labour be used for industrial work for the occupied country itself.<sup>1</sup>

(5) In order to release foreigners employed outside Germany in essential war positions, longer working hours and increased Sunday work were introduced in the occupied territories.

(6) As an incentive to better individual output, piece rates for foreigners were introduced on a large scale.

(7) In general, the wages and food of the individual foreign worker were to be closely related to his willingness and output.

(8) Control over foreigners working in Germany, and for Germany, in the occupied territories, was tightened. The uniformed factory guards (*Werkschutz*) were provided with arms—an important exception to the rule that in National Socialist Germany only the army and the Party were allowed to wear or possess arms. In addition, methods of punishment became even more ruthless than they had been before.

It was no great exaggeration for the Commissioner-General to speak of "the hundreds of millions of people whose fates are largely determined by the German Labour Allocation Administration"<sup>2</sup>, of which he had been the chief since March 1942. For Fritz Sauckel's powers extended not only over the persons actually recruited for work and over their families and relatives, but also over those who were not yet drafted, but might expect to be called up by another recruitment drive.

While the organisation of labour allocation was formerly predominantly a German problem, through the appointment of the Commissioner-General for Manpower it became an all-embracing, European task. . . As far as the allocation of labour is concerned our plans as well as our actions no longer stop at the old frontiers of the Reich. . . All this was achieved by establishing our staffs and sub-branches in all occupied territories as well as in all European countries which feel an obligation towards the New Europe.

Special representatives of the Commissioner-General, directly responsible to him and acting under his direct instructions, were sent to the Protectorate [Bohemia-Moravia], the Government-General and the [other] occupied territories.<sup>2</sup>

Although several important changes in the German administrative scheme were made during the later stages of the war, the

<sup>1</sup> *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 5 Sept. 1942, Part I, p. 382.

<sup>2</sup> Editorial in *Arbeitseinsatz und Arbeitslosenhilfe*, No. 1-2, Jan. 1943.

<sup>3</sup> *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 31, 5 Nov. 1942, Part I, p. 475.

powers of the Commissioner-General were not limited. By an Order of 11 January 1944<sup>1</sup>, he assumed authority to issue decrees with the force of collective rules, as well as instructions for factories and individual working contracts. In the course of the administrative reorganisation following the attempt on Adolf Hitler's life on 20 July 1944, Sauckel was subordinated to Reich Minister Joseph Goebbels in the latter's new capacity as Commissioner-General for Total War Effort.<sup>2</sup> This merely meant a transfer in the supreme supervision of manpower affairs from Reich Marshal Göring—who had been Sauckel's superior up to that time—to Goebbels, the Reich Minister of Propaganda and Enlightenment.

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<sup>1</sup> *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1944, Part I, p. 22. These collective rules and individual contracts were to be in force in territories which fell under the jurisdiction of more than one Reich labour trustee.

<sup>2</sup> Joseph Goebbels' new title was *Reichsbeauftragter für den totalen Kriegseinsatz*; it emphasised the importance attached to complete mobilisation of the remaining manpower supply.

## CHAPTER III

### THE RECRUITMENT OF FOREIGN WORKERS

The National Socialist machinery for manpower allocation (*Arbeitseinsatzverwaltung*) was regarded as one of the militant branches of the régime. "Not only during, but before, the war it successfully stood the test of most difficult conditions. It is accustomed to hard struggles and is excellently equipped to solve the most complex problems."<sup>1</sup>

These problems arose in connection with the recruitment and deportation of foreign workers, which became, during the war, the principal task of the German labour allocation service.

In the occupied territories, the members of its staff wore a field-grey uniform (without insignia denoting rank). On the left sleeve of the tunic, a badge bearing the swastika and the inscription "Labour Allocation Staff" (*Arbeitseinsatzstab*) was worn. These uniforms were shown for the first time in Germany at the Weimar Conference of the Labour Allocation Service in September 1942.<sup>2</sup>

As was pointed out by an official writer, the conditions under which the officials had to work in the "colonised and occupied territories" were characterised by the fact that in these regions, *individual dossiers were in most cases lacking, and so, frequently, were the official circulars and law gazettes*. In other words, the German officials had often to rely on their own discretion in deciding the methods to be used in order to fill their "quotas" of foreign manpower for transportation to Germany.

In the Government-General of Poland, a Decree by the Governor-General, dated 26 October 1939, and amended on 14 December 1939, announced the introduction of forced labour for the benefit of the occupying authorities. It applied to all Poles, of both sexes, between the ages of 14 and 60. A further Decree, of February 1940, provided that these persons might be deported to Germany for agricultural and other work.

After the end of the military campaign of 1940 in western

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<sup>1</sup> Editorial in *Arbeitseinsatz und Arbeitslosenhilfe*, No. 3-4, Feb. 1943, p. 17.

<sup>2</sup> *Arbeitseinsatz und Arbeitslosenhilfe*, No. 1-2, Jan. 1943, p. 9.

Europe, the German authorities sought to induce French workers to volunteer for work in Germany. They laid great emphasis on the fact that France suffered from large-scale unemployment, and that the only efficient way of combating it would be to transfer large numbers of workers to Germany.

In point of fact, various measures taken by the German authorities resulted at first in an increase of unemployment in France. For November 1940 the official figure of French unemployed was 1 million. By December 1941, however, it had, according to the same official source, decreased to 190,000.<sup>1</sup> It is impossible to ascertain to what extent this marked reduction was due to workers' migration to Germany<sup>2</sup>, to the increased employment of French workers in German-dominated armament industries, or to changed methods of computation.

In Italy, the German policy of importing "hundreds of thousands of valuable workers to Germany" was explained as a process of rationalisation on a European scale. "A considerable portion of Italian manpower has been moved, so to speak, to the location where the raw materials can be found", since "the Italian armament industry, on account of the [Italian] raw material situation, cannot expand to the same extent as the German."<sup>3</sup>

From the very beginning of the invasion of the Soviet Union in the summer of 1941, the German recruitment agencies applied the same ruthless methods as they had in Poland.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Vichy Government published the following figures on unemployment in the occupied and unoccupied zones of France (without Alsace and Lorraine):

	Number of unemployed	Women (per cent. of total)
November 1940	1,000,000	26
December 1941	190,000	62
January 1942	183,000	55
February 1942	176,000	60
March "	166,000	59
April "	143,000	66
December "	63,000	67
January 1943	61,000	63
February "	55,000	65
March "	46,000	66
April "	42,000	66

(*Bulletin de la statistique générale de la France*, May 1943, p. 135; June 1943, p. 181.)

<sup>2</sup> For an official German description of recruitment procedures in the summer of 1941, see Appendix III.

<sup>3</sup> *Monatshefte für NS-Sozialpolitik*, No. 5-6, Mar. 1943, p. 58.

<sup>4</sup> A description of the mobilisation of Soviet workers for the German war effort has already been published by the International Labour Office: "Soviet Workers in Germany", in *International Labour Review*, Vol. XLVII, No. 5, May 1943, pp. 576-590. For German recruitment methods in the U.S.S.R., see Notes of 27 April 1942 and 11 May 1943 by Mr. V. M. Molotov, People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs, to the ambassadors and envoys of all countries with which the U.S.S.R. maintains diplomatic relations (*Information Bulletin*, Embassy of the U.S.S.R., Washington 1942, and 15 May 1943).



After the appointment of the Commissioner-General for Manpower in March 1942, the methods of violence which had been used from the first in the East were increasingly introduced in the other occupied territories. In a survey of the first half year of his activities, addressed to "all officials and employees of the Labour Allocation Administration and the labour trustee offices in Greater Germany, the annexed and occupied territories, and the friendly foreign countries", Fritz Sauckel wrote:

In the past six months, the labour allocation services at my disposal have fulfilled their functions under the most trying circumstances . . . they have rendered a service to the war and the armament industry, and thereby to the Führer and our nation, of which they can be proud. BUT THERE MUST BE NO SLOWING UP . . . the outcome of the war is inextricably bound up with the efficient allocation of labour . . . This task is, of course, bound to grow increasingly difficult. Every one of us must therefore increase his or her efforts. The Führer has ordered that the demand for manpower, both in Germany and in the occupied territories, *must be met in all circumstances*. This command will be fulfilled as thoroughly in the future as it was in the past, in spite of all resistance and difficulties. *There is no such word as "impossible" for the Labour Administration*. . . The Labour Administration has to fulfil a gigantic and unique task . . . Again and again, we shall find the fresh manpower needed for the armament industry and agriculture.<sup>1</sup>

The German recruitment campaigns sometimes emphasised the number, and sometimes the qualifications, of the workers to be imported. In the latter case, skilled workers, particularly in the metal and heavy industries, were most urgently demanded; however, the specialists needed covered a very wide range of occupations, from cooks and waiters, gardeners, miners and chauffeurs, to nurses and physicians.

Very frequently, however, the recruitment agencies were ordered to supply a certain number of workers, with little regard to their occupational background. In these cases workers were forcibly rounded up, put into railway trucks and sent off to unknown destinations. In some places, advance notice was given; in others it was not. Men and young boys were often arrested in the streets, in eating places and motion picture theatres and in their homes. Reports from many occupied territories state that on these occasions the German soldiers were armed with machine guns and accompanied by Gestapo agents.

These methods however, consistently alternated with inducements of various kinds, as a less direct means of persuasion. The details of these measures of compulsion and pressure varied greatly.

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<sup>1</sup> *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 31, 5 Nov. 1942, Part I, p. 475 (capitals and italics in original).

For example, in the Government-General a method sometimes used was to require each village to produce food for the Reich; if the quota was not filled, more men were rounded up and transported for work into the Reich (or in some cases executed). On one occasion Denmark was asked to send 40,000 Danes to Germany for work as a condition of the despatch of fuel from Germany to Denmark.

The German Military Administration sometimes promised Belgians an increased bread ration if they would cease resisting deportation to Germany; otherwise, agricultural workers and heads of large families would no longer be exempted. For example, on 5 March 1943, the Military Commander in Belgium and northern France issued the following Decree in German, Flemish and French:

The communal food and ration services may not issue ration cards to persons who are reported to them by the Military Administration (*Oberfeldkommandatur*, *Feldkommandatur*, *Werbestelle*) or by the labour offices as having broken their contract of employment, refused to submit to compulsory employment, or shown signs of ill will in their employment, until the service that has reported them withdraws its report.<sup>1</sup>

In the spring of 1943, Dutch and other "Germanic" foreign workers were invited to volunteer for work in the Ukraine, with the promise that they would be allowed to send 20 kg (44 lbs.) of foodstuff home every month.<sup>2</sup> Priority in obtaining shoes was promised to Belgian workers who presented themselves provided with a certificate that they were willing to work abroad for three months.

In France, German authorities sometimes offered exemption from prosecution to non-political prisoners awaiting trial if they would agree to go to work in Germany. In June 1943, the Vichy Government authorised its Minister of Justice to suspend sentences of imprisonment in cases not considered harmful to the community, in order to enable these persons to leave for Germany, because "it would be intolerable . . . if imprisonment automatically and completely exempted convicted persons from working in Germany".

Open compulsion, without any offer of inducements to volunteers, was simultaneously used. Early in 1943, the Warsaw Labour Office secured a list of the students of certain trade schools and forced the students of some of them (boys of 16 and over, girls of 17 and over) to go to Germany, under the escort of their own teachers.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Quatrième Ordonnance*, No. 96, 5 Mar. 1943, p. 1251.

<sup>2</sup> *Deutsche Zeitung in den Niederlanden*, 20 May 1943; *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, 28 May 1943.

<sup>3</sup> Reported in the March 1943 issue of the Warsaw "underground" paper *Biuletyn Informacyjny*.

By Order of 6 October 1942, the German Military Commander introduced compulsory labour service for all male Belgians of 18 to 50 years of age, and all unmarried female Belgians from 21 to 25 years of age. The Order expressly stated that all Belgians drafted for compulsory labour service were liable to be transferred to Germany. Whether the labour conscript had to work in Belgium or Germany, the work was invariably for German war purposes. For employment in Belgium, the agencies in charge of the distribution of Belgian manpower were the German labour offices in Belgium; for employment in Germany, the German military authorities (*Oberfeldkommandatur* or *Feldkommandatur*) were responsible. No Belgian was allowed to leave his employment without previous authorisation by the German authorities and every male Belgian between 18 and 50 years of age had to submit proof of the nature of his employment. Work books were introduced even for those not drafted for compulsory labour service.<sup>1</sup>

As an example of methods of enforcement, the following Order of 1 March 1943, issued by Major-General Bruns, the German commandant of the city of Ghent, may be quoted:

In order to compel persons to comply with the Decree regarding compulsory labour service, measures may be taken against them or their possessions. In order to prevent assistance being given to those refusing labour service, measures may also be taken against relatives (wives, children, parents, brothers or sisters), *i.e.*, against their persons or possessions. The same measures may be taken against all persons assisting recalcitrants. The proceeds resulting from these measures may be employed for social purposes, especially for compatriots working in Germany.<sup>2</sup>

Many similar examples could be cited.<sup>3</sup>

After the policy of voluntary enlistment had to be relinquished, the labour recruits from France went to Germany, partly "to replace prisoners of war" and partly "as compulsory labour".<sup>4</sup>

From time to time, contingents of prisoners of war were promised release and, consequently, exemption from German military law and courts martial, if their output as workers, while prisoners, was satisfactory. This method was used on French prisoners of war, with some intervals, from 1940 onwards; but it is less well known that it was also used on prisoners of war of other nations.

<sup>1</sup> *Verordnungsblatt des Militärbefehlshabers in Belgien und Nordfrankreich*, No. 87, 7 Oct. 1942.

<sup>2</sup> Reprinted in *Volk en Staat*, 6 Mar. 1943.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *International Labour Review*, Vol. XLV, No. 1, Jan. 1942, pp. 84-85; also Vol. XLVI, No. 3, Sept. 1942, pp. 347-349; Vol. XLVII, No. 3, Mar. 1943, pp. 372-374; Vol. XLVII, No. 5, May 1943, pp. 654-657; and No. 6, June 1943, p. 770.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. for example, *Circulaire* M.O. 2/114/79 of 11 October 1943, concerning the recruitment of workers for Germany; *Bulletin officiel du Ministère du Travail* (Vichy), No. 21, 1 Nov. 1943, pp. 1798-9.

On 11 August 1942, for example, the Chief of the Supreme Command of the *Wehrmacht*, in agreement with the Commissioner-General for Manpower, issued an Order of the Day releasing prisoners of war of Ukrainian nationality from the Galician District of Lwow, provided that the examination of every individual case showed that the prisoner was "neither work-shy, nor anti-German nor suspect from the standpoint of military security". The released prisoner was not, however, allowed to return home. He was handed over to the local German labour office "in order to be put to work". It was ordered that, as far as possible, the ex-prisoner should continue to work at the same employment as before his release. Every man had to sign the following declaration:

I, the undersigned, having today been released as a German war prisoner, hereby undertake to perform as a free worker whatever work may be assigned to me by the labour office and not to leave my place of work without the consent of the labour office and the police, until the labour office grants me final release. I understand that whoever illegally leaves his place of employment is liable to punishment and that, if I do so, I shall be immediately arrested.<sup>1</sup>

In industrial regions, particularly in France, special recruiting agents were used who were often advised by representatives of the German undertakings for whom the workers were destined, "so as to decrease the risk of error".<sup>2</sup> German officials, frequently accompanied by representatives of German employers, would either enter French factories and choose workers by name, or demand lists of workers from the French employer. In both cases the selected worker was summoned to appear before the German labour office representative, and if he failed to appear, the French labour inspector signed a contract in his stead. If the worker did not appear at the appointed place and time, he was brought forcibly to the station; if he could not be found, a relative was conscripted in his place or his family was deprived of its ration cards.<sup>3</sup>

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The field agents of the Labour Allocation Administration were conscious from the outset of the physical danger to which they were exposed from the hostile population of the occupied territories, and were determined to repay this hostility by ruthlessness. A high official stated in 1942:

<sup>1</sup> *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 29, 15 Oct. 1942, p. 439.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. TROM, in *Arbeitsrechtshartei*, 3 May 1941.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. "The Recruitment of French Labour for Germany", in *International Labour Review*, Vol. XLVII, No. 3, Mar. 1943, pp. 312-343, and "The Mobilisation of French Workers for Germany", in *idem*, Vol. XLIX, No. 1, Jan. 1944, pp. 38-51.

Recruitment officials in the new territories have often to discharge their duties at great risk to their lives. Their only resource is to display absolute authority and great energy.<sup>1</sup>

A few months later Dr. Werner Mansfeld, State Secretary in the Reich Ministry of Labour, and editor in chief of the *Deutsches Arbeitsrecht*, an authoritative periodical on labour law and industrial relations, wrote as follows:

The work of these outlying labour recruitment offices, which is full of hardship and has frequently to be performed in the most dangerous circumstances, can never be sufficiently appreciated.<sup>2</sup>

In his New Year message for 1944, Fritz Sauckel clearly revealed the atmosphere in which his administration was working:

During 1943 again, the labour allocation services were faced with extremely difficult tasks and almost insoluble problems. . . In the fulfilment of their duties prominent and faithful colleagues fell victims to terroristic and murderous attacks by the enemy. . . 1944 will confront us with tasks infinitely more difficult than those which the past year has brought so abundantly. They must be overcome, whatever the circumstances. . . I must also definitely insist, in spite of all difficulties, on even more speed and efficiency than in the past.<sup>3</sup>

By the end of 1943, the changed military situation had decisively reduced Germany's "Eastern" reserve of manpower. Yet greater help of every description was more urgently needed than ever. An Order of 5 January 1944, for instance, signed by the Head of the Public Health Section in the Reich Ministry of the Interior and by the Commissioner-General for Manpower, emphasised "the urgency of mobilising all foreign physicians, pharmacists, doctors of dentistry and dental practitioners". This recruitment was to be undertaken in German-occupied territories, and also in allied, friendly and neutral countries, in co-operation with the Public Health Section, by the Labour Allocation Administration or by the competent military or civil authorities. The Order expressly forbade "any other authorities, organisations or persons" to undertake recruitment.<sup>4</sup>

To compensate for the loss of "Eastern" manpower, it was proposed that an intensified labour drive should be undertaken

<sup>1</sup> Gauamtsleiter Oberregierungsrat W. ESCHER, quoted in *Arbeitseinsatz und Arbeitslosenhilfe*, Nos. 19-22, Oct.-Nov. 1943, p. 150.

<sup>2</sup> *Deutsches Arbeitsrecht*, Feb. 1943, p. 23.

<sup>3</sup> *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 1944, Part I, p. 13.

<sup>4</sup> *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 10 Feb. 1944, Part I, p. 53. Under a Decree of the Führer of 20 July 1942 (*Reichsarbeitsblatt*, July 1942, Part I, p. 378), the employment of this medical and dental personnel was to be regulated by the head of the Public Health Section of the Reich Ministry of the Interior, who, in his Party capacity as Reich health leader (*Reichsgesundheitsführer*), controlled medical practitioners, hospitals and health services in Germany.

in the southern and western parts of Europe still under German domination. The *Bremer Nachrichten*, for example, wrote on 13 February 1944:

For 1944 not hundreds of thousands, but a few millions [of new foreign labour recruits] are required. . . This task has now become very difficult. . . Yet closer examination shows that this year too it will be possible to obtain several millions of foreign workers. . . [They would come] first of all, from Italy, followed at some distance by France, and at a greater interval by the Netherlands and Belgium. The East and South-East should be able to supply a few hundreds of thousands, that is, as many as the Netherlands and Belgium together.

A few days later, Dr. Walter Stothfang urged continuous extension of industrial war output in European countries; he demanded that superfluous foreign workers be placed at the disposal of the Reich, and that the productivity of European workers be increased.<sup>1</sup>

At a meeting of chairmen of regional labour offices in May 1944, the Commissioner-General for Manpower again called for "calmness and harshness" in the "distribution, direction and guardianship of Europe's manpower".<sup>2</sup>

The official attitude wavered between the contention that all countries in the orbit of Germany should share its war because Germany, in mobilising Europe's labour forces, was acting as protector of the continent, and defiant acknowledgement of the opposition created by the policy of compulsory recruitment. In support of the first contention, the non-German nations were frequently reminded that they "had only to work, while Germany had to fight" and thus really made a bargain. The argument overlooked the fact that the overwhelming majority of foreign workers considered Germany as their enemy.

As champion and leader in this war, Germany has not only acquired the moral right but, as the upholder and apostle of a just and sound New European Order, has indeed the moral duty of ensuring that all European labour reserves are mobilised. . . It is impossible to do too much in this matter. . . Compared with Germany's own very heavy sacrifices in blood, the sacrifices in labour which the dominated nations have had to accept are comparatively small. They must therefore be made all the more readily and rapidly. . . Germany must demand the employment of foreigners in Germany; the demand is not unfair in view of the blood sacrificed by German soldiers.<sup>3</sup>

Reports from all parts of German-occupied Europe disclosed that the labour drives were being intensified. Compulsion

<sup>1</sup> *Deutsche Bergwerks-Zeitung*, 22 Feb. 1944.

<sup>2</sup> *Idem*, 17 May 1944.

<sup>3</sup> Walter STOTHFANG, in *Hamburger Fremdenblatt*, 4 Mar. 1944. He expressed the same ideas in a lecture on the organisation of European labour supply, delivered before the German Institute for International Affairs.

was increasingly used; but, on the other hand, some attempt was made to eliminate the carelessness and wastefulness that had characterised Germany's foreign manpower policy in the earlier phases of the war. A circular of the Commissioner-General for Manpower of 18 January 1944 acknowledged that, in the past, many foreign workers, particularly from the Balkans, had been sent to Germany, but had "never begun work, because they were, from the outset, incapable of it".<sup>1</sup> In a reference to Greek labour conscripts, it was stated that:

Germany accepts only first-class workers. In addition to skill, the state of health and the condition of the clothing are taken into consideration. In Salonika, for example, all volunteers are X-rayed. At the German frontier a thorough medical examination is made. Those who are not "A-1" are immediately sent back.

At the end of March 1944, in an attempt to get a new contingent of 250,000 Frenchmen sent to Germany, and also to get French workers to work for the occupying Power in France, the Germans, in co-operation with the Vichy authorities, set up "joint Franco-German verification committees". Every French employer had personally to submit to these committees (which generally met in the mayor's office or at the Chamber of Commerce) a complete list of all persons employed by him, including members of his own family. On the basis of these lists, the committees decided immediately, without hearing the persons concerned, who was to be recruited for work in Germany. The committees could, in fact, recruit the employer himself if they considered that his presence was not absolutely essential for the conduct of his business.<sup>2</sup>

In Paris, as late as May 1944, labour conscription was carried out in a systematic military fashion. Certain quarters would be surrounded by strong cordons of German *Feldgendarmarie*, Gestapo and French police units, with Germans armed with tommy guns at street corners.

In Norway, in the spring of 1944, the Germans ordered the mobilisation of 30,000 to 40,000 Norwegians. The Labour Office of Bergen and Laksevag ordered all women born between 1 January 1904 and 31 December 1923 to register for mobilisation in the German labour service. They had to present their registration forms in order to obtain the ration cards that were to come into force in May.

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<sup>1</sup> *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 10 Feb. 1944, Part I, p. 53.

<sup>2</sup> This scheme applied only to undertakings classified as essential, which had not, therefore, been closed under the programme of "industrial and commercial concentration" for the saving of manpower.

After the invasion of France had begun in June 1944, official policy was well expressed by the *Hamburger Tageblatt* of 29 July 1944:

It must be fully realised that at the present time it will not be possible to bring as large numbers of foreign workers to the Reich as in the past two years. Yet there are still possibilities abroad and the authorities are absolutely determined to use them.

The invasion of June 1944 and the ensuing military events led, in fact, to an intensification of the labour drive in the various occupied territories, when Reich Minister Joseph Goebbels was appointed Commissioner-General for the Total War Effort. From Greece in the south-east, to Norway in the north-west of Europe, the mobilisation of foreign workers was accelerated. The German-dominated Dutch press advocated large-scale raids by the (National Socialist) Dutch Rural Guards to track down evaders of the labour draft: "procedure must also be simplified, so that armed terrorists, when arrested, can be summarily judged, and investigation and administration will not be needlessly burdened".<sup>1</sup> In Norway systematic raids were organised, mostly during the night, in order to arrest men who had failed to register for conscripted labour. In August 1944, industrialists in the Netherlands had to fill out special questionnaires (known as "Z cards") designed to facilitate total mobilisation. Employers who failed to co-operate were warned that they would make themselves and their workers liable to employment elsewhere.<sup>2</sup>

In the later stages of the war Germany made particularly intensified efforts to mobilise Italian workers. Although the abdication of Benito Mussolini as *Duce* of Italy was soon followed by the establishment of the pro-German "Italian Fascist Republic" in the regions not liberated by the Allies, the German procedure of military occupation and labour recruitment in Italy, introduced in the late summer of 1943, did not differ from that followed in occupied enemy territories.

In September 1943, the German occupation authorities in Italy appealed to all men aged 17 to 40 and all women aged 17 to 35 to volunteer for work in Germany. On 28 September 1943, the Milan radio broadcast a warning by the German Army command that "whoever fails to comply at once with this order [*i.e.*, to report to the Italian authorities in charge of the recruitment drive] or tries to evade it by changing his residence will be tried according to German martial law".

<sup>1</sup> *De Zwarte Soldat* (Zwolle), 24 Aug. 1944.

<sup>2</sup> *Deutsche Zeitung in den Niederlanden* (Amsterdam), 4 Aug. 1944.



It should be noted that this labour drive was not limited to Italy proper but was extended to approximately 800,000 Italians living in southern France. Until General Badoglio's declaration of war upon Germany, only volunteers were recruited from Italians living in southern France. After the middle of October 1943 Italians living in the Bouches-du-Rhône Department were compulsorily directed to work for Germany, as can be seen from the following notice published in French and Italian in the French newspaper *Le Mot d'Ordre*:

All Italians between the ages of 16 and 50 living in the Bouches-du-Rhône Department are required to place themselves at the disposal of the German authorities for compulsory labour. They must immediately, without exception, report to the town hall for the census previously announced by the Prefect.

The German Employment Office will send those concerned a "transfer notice" indicating the place to which they are to be transferred. The German authorities announce for the last time that persons who persistently fail to comply with transfer notices will immediately be arrested by the police and interned.

The German labour drive in northern Italy encountered very strong opposition. In fact, probably the first organised and large-scale strikes which were called during the war in protest against German recruitment methods occurred in northern Italy between January and March 1944.

The strike wave was ruthlessly suppressed and deportation of Italian workers continued. A report published in Sweden<sup>1</sup> stated that the Italian Fascist militia and German S.S. troops daily raided cafés, restaurants and bars and also watched motion picture theatres in order to catch young men, whom they dispatched to Germany in freight cars and cattle trucks.

A Swiss newspaper, in April 1944, described the comb-out for manpower undertaken throughout occupied Italy. The original plan had been compulsory mobilisation of 500,000 workers, in provincial contingents:

The workers resisted this compulsory service in every possible manner . . . In addition to legal mobilisation, the occupying authorities resorted to extraordinary methods of compulsion. They obtained from various undertakings, through the Union of Industrial Employers, nominal rolls of the workers, with their qualifications and addresses, and exacted the provision of contingents of workers in proportion to the strength of the undertaking. At the outset, a general contingent of 40 per cent. of skilled workers was mentioned, but in some cases they apparently demanded only 20 per cent. and after laborious negotiation they were sometimes content with a lower figure. The workers were forcibly transported to Germany . . .

There were also special raids directly on factories. They were generally directed against well-known anti-fascist suspects and others whom, as it was said, it was not desirable to leave in Italy .

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<sup>1</sup> *Aftontidningen*, 15 Mar. 1944.

In April 1944, advertisements appeared, of which the following is an example:

Italian workers! All non-essential plants and industries in Italy are to be closed down. There is but one way of escaping unemployment: To go to work in Germany.<sup>1</sup>

After the invasion of western Europe had begun, neutral observers reported increasing harshness and an increase in the number of executions of Italians in connection with the recruitment drive.

### TRANSPORTATION OF FOREIGN WORKERS

Only a small percentage of foreign workers entered Germany as individual travellers. The great majority of them were taken into Germany in mass transports, under severe military or police supervision. The journey from their home countries to their working places often lasted a great many days. Very strict precautions were taken to prevent them from escaping during the journey.

In accordance with the policy of systematic discrimination, the transportation of "Eastern" workers was from the beginning carried out regardless of even minimum standards of hygiene and comfort. Some of the official German regulations concerning the transportation of "Eastern" workers used the term *verfrachten*, a word denoting the transport of goods or cattle from one place to another. The lack of adequate provisions can be gathered from occasional reports in the German press, such as the statement that recruited "Eastern" workers travelled in freight cars "which are often comfortably fitted out with stoves and straw"<sup>2</sup>, or that "tens of thousands of wooden shoes will have to be manufactured in Germany for the workers from the East, who often arrive in the Reich bare-footed".<sup>3</sup>

In his Note of 11 May 1943, Mr. Molotov stated: "Day and night, trains with slaves roll to Germany from the occupied districts of the Ukraine, Byelorussia and Russia. The people are loaded into cars like cattle, 60 to 70 to each boxcar. Exhausted and sick people are thrown out of the cars down embankments and thus the roads to the west are littered with the bodies of Soviet people."

The longer the war lasted, the more the methods formerly used only for the transportation of Polish and Soviet workers were extended to labour recruits from other parts of Europe. The use

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<sup>1</sup> *Crociata Italica* (Cremona), 19 Apr. 1944.

<sup>2</sup> *Berliner Börsen-Zeitung*, 11 Sept. 1942.

<sup>3</sup> *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 15 Sept. 1942.

of freight cars instead of passenger cars, and the locking or sealing of these cars during stages of the journey, have been reported from various European countries. At the turn of 1944-45, Netherlands doctors protested against "the ever-increasing scale and ever more violent manner of the deportation" of Netherlands. "The men are . . . deported regardless of obvious disease or disablement, driven along roads until they are utterly exhausted, often herded together like cattle in trucks, freight cars and ships' holds, entirely without food." For example, on 12 November 1944, a train with deportees arrived in Haarlem, with 50-60 men locked up in trucks without straw. "Natural functions had to be performed on the floor, where they subsequently had to sleep. Diseases included gonorrhoea, syphilis, pulmonary tuberculosis, diphtheria, and the serious form of epilepsy . . . There was no heating or lighting . . . The trains were continually shot at . . ."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Letter from Netherlands doctors to the German Governor, of 6 Jan. 1945, published in *Het Parool* (*Herrijzend Nederland*, 20 Jan. 1945).

## CHAPTER IV

### TRANSPLANTATION OF FOREIGN UNDERTAKINGS TO GERMANY

#### IN THE WEST

On 26 August 1940, two months and a day after the German-French Armistice came into force, the Reich Marshal of Greater Germany, in his capacity as head of the Four-Year Plan, issued a Decree concerning "the planned exploitation of the economy of the occupied western territories for German war economy".<sup>1</sup> The explanatory statement began:

It is a political necessity of the State to mobilise in a planned manner and to the greatest extent the economic capacities and raw materials in the occupied western territories, in order to meet the demands of continued warfare, to relieve German armament production, and to increase the war potential. The Supreme Command of the *Wehrmacht* and the Reich Minister for Armament and Munitions have already issued the necessary orders.

In order to facilitate this programme, three central production boards (*Zentralauftragsstellen*) were set up: one for the territory of the Reich Commissioner for the occupied Netherlands; one for the Military Commander in Belgium and northern France; and one for the Military Commander in France.<sup>2</sup> It was expressly stated that these central production boards formed part of the military administration (*Rüstungsinspektion*: known in France as *Wehrwirtschafts- und Rüstungsstab Frankreich*).

A Decree by Reich Marshal Göring, of 7 October 1940<sup>3</sup>, encouraged the "combination of the capital assets (*Kapitalverflech-*

<sup>1</sup> Decree V.P. 14/395 (*Kommentar z. R.V.G.*, Vol. 2, Part IV, *Auftragsverlagerung*, pp. 1 *et seq.*).

<sup>2</sup> The Orders concerning the activities of the central production boards in the occupied western territories were issued jointly by the Reich Minister for Economic Affairs and by the Chief of the Supreme Command of the *Wehrmacht*. The directors of the three central production boards were appointed by the Economic Department of the Supreme Command of the *Wehrmacht*, and the assistant directors by the Reich Minister for Economic Affairs; these appointments were made by mutual agreement. The central production boards had to give their consent to all orders from public or private customers in Germany to be executed in the plants in the occupied western territories, if the orders exceeded 5,000 RM in value, or required more than 500 kg (1100 lbs.) of iron and steel, 100 kg (220 lbs.) of non-ferrous metal, 25 kg (55 lbs.) of rubber, or any quantity of textiles or leather.

<sup>3</sup> Decree V.P. 16411/5, *ibid.*, pp. 2 *et seq.*

tung) of German industry with those of the industries of the occupied western territories" and demanded that for this purpose "those German undertakings which transfer part of their own orders to industries in the occupied western territories should be given an opportunity to enter into economic combinations with the latter".

In the main, these "economic combinations" took one of two forms in the field of industrial production. Either German firms subcontracted or placed orders with the foreign firms and the orders were then carried out at the foreign plants; or foreign plants were transplanted, together with their machinery, technicians and workers, to Germany.

"French metal-manufacturing plants are working almost exclusively on orders transferred to them 'under the transference scheme'", wrote G. Ferber in the official quarterly publication of the Four-Year Plan.<sup>1</sup> As early as July 1942, the head of the Department of Economic Affairs of the Military Command in France stated that orders placed with French factories in the region administered by the German Military Commander amounted to more than 100,000 million French francs. He explained that detailed information about these orders had to be withheld for military reasons, but remarked that "it would certainly be safe to assume that the French metal industry primarily benefits from this subcontracting of orders". In the rubber industry, German undertakings put their raw materials, production experience and patents at the disposal of the five leading French undertakings; in return, the French undertakings ceded some of their foreign investments to the Germans. The *Semperit Gummi Werke A.G.*, Vienna, for example, furnished "production advice and synthetic rubber" to the Hutchinson Company, which in turn handed over to the Semperit concern half its interests in Spain and Italy.<sup>2</sup>

In the chemical industry, German-French collaboration was organised by the *Farbenindustrie A.G.* on the German side, and by the Kuhlmann Company on the French side. These two concerns founded the "Francolor" Corporation for the production of dyes in France, with a capital of 800 million French francs, 51 per cent. of which were in German hands.

A vast programme for the transplantation of industrial undertakings from the occupied western territories to Germany was drawn up in the summer of 1941.<sup>3</sup> In compliance with the ruling that the employment of the productive capacities of western European industry should be organised by combining the capital

<sup>1</sup> *Der Vierjahresplan*, 15 Nov. 1942, p. 529.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*; from the report to the shareholders at the annual meeting of the Hutchinson Company, quoted by G. Ferber.

<sup>3</sup> Circular by the Reich Minister of Labour, of 14 July 1941.

assets of individual German with individual foreign undertakings, the scheme provided for individual contracts between German and foreign industrialists. The contracts had to specify, in detail, the tasks to be fulfilled by the foreign undertaking while in Germany, the number and categories of workers to be used, and the period for which the agreement was to be in force.

The financial conditions "do not concern the agencies in charge of labour administration"; the profit allowed to the foreign industrialist might be laid down in the contract either as a lump sum or on a cost-plus basis. If necessary, however, prices could be controlled by the Reich Price Commissioner. German employers were merely to be warned by the labour officers that the use of foreign undertakings must not lead to an increase in prices.

The Labour Office had, however, to watch very closely the relations between the foreign employer and his own workers. Guarantees had to be given that aliens employed by the foreign undertaking would not receive more favourable treatment than comparable German workers. The Labour Office further made it clear that the conditions applying to foreign workers employed by the foreign undertaking must be the same as those applying to aliens recruited for German employment. Otherwise, the official instructions insist, industrial peace would be disturbed and recruitment of individual workers in foreign countries would be rendered more difficult. Foreign workers, even if employed by a foreign employer, were thus subject to German laws and regulations while in Germany, especially as regards wages, separation allowances and holidays.

As a matter of principle, the rules concerning the employment of foreign workers by German firms also applied to the use of entire foreign undertakings. Foreign workers who moved to Germany together with their plant or undertaking were subject to the same treatment and limitations as if they had been transferred to Germany to work for a German employer. They had to receive their wage envelope in accordance with German regulations, at their place of work. The German provisions concerning sickness and invalidity insurance, insurance of salaried employees, pension insurance and insurance of miners applied to foreigners. Contributions had to be paid to the German insurance funds by the German firm on behalf of the foreign firm. In the case of accident insurance only, some foreigners, for example, Belgians and Dutch, continued for the first six months to be covered by the workmen's compensation insurance of their own country.<sup>1</sup> German taxation

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<sup>1</sup> German-Belgian Treaty of 6 July 1912 concerning accident insurance, and German-Netherlands Treaty of 27 August 1907, as amended on 13 May 1914.

laws applied to foreigners and due regard had to be paid to agreements for the prevention of double taxation.

The Reich Minister of Labour declared that it was "not advisable to quote wage scales in contracts between a German and foreign employer; it suffices to refer to the existing general wage regulations in force in the German locality where the work is to be performed". The German employer, it was pointed out, was fully protected, because the foreign employer possessed authority over his own workers and had therefore to settle their complaints. If, however, the contract between the German and foreign employers did contain specific wage scales, the consent of the German labour trustee had to be sought.

Whenever, in the course of the co-operation between the German and the foreign undertaking, changes were found necessary—in the number or category of workers, for instance—an additional agreement had to be signed and submitted to the competent German authorities for their consent. Every additional agreement had to be examined on its own merits.

Detailed provisions regulated the procedure to be followed by the foreign employer in securing labour permits for his workers from the German police authorities.

In the construction industry the German and foreign employers enjoyed a smaller degree of discretion. The Commissioner-General for Manpower, in agreement with the Commissioner-General for special questions concerning the construction industry, issued a model contract, the conditions of which were declared to be compulsory. The main provisions of this model contract were as follows.

The German firm (called *Auftraggeber*—the "ordering firm") specifies the type of work to be executed by the foreign firm (called *Leihfirma*—the "borrowed firm"). If the work performed is to be paid for by a lump sum, the financial arrangements are not to be mentioned. If, however, the foreign firm is to be remunerated on a cost-plus basis, the remuneration for every category of worker, per work day, must be specified. It is explicitly stated in the model contract that the foreign firm must give detailed information upon the number and category of workers to be employed, but that the workers must obey the orders of the German firm, which is also made responsible for their accommodation and feeding. The cost of these services is to be deducted from the payments due to the foreign firm. Travelling expenses to and from the place of work are borne by the German firm. The foreign employer must guarantee a working week of 60 hours for his workers. For work exceeding 48 hours a week, overtime pay of 25 per cent. must be granted. On Sundays and holidays, the first eight hours of work are to be

paid for at the rate of 50 per cent. and the following hours at the rate of 75 per cent. above the normal. The wage and working conditions in force at the place of their work apply automatically to them. Additional payments are permissible only if authorised by the Reich Labour Trustee. In the absence of such consent, no additional payments or other emoluments may be made either to the foreign workers themselves, or, on their behalf, to any other person in Germany or abroad. If, as a result of action taken by the foreign firm, the labour force drops below the number stipulated in the contract, the foreign firm can be required to bring in an additional labour supply.

The taxes due from foreign workers under German taxation laws must be paid to the German tax authorities by the German firm, which debits the account of the foreign firm accordingly. (Since German labour laws apply to the foreign workers, they become dues-paying members of the German Labour Front and of the other National Socialist organisations, membership of which is compulsory.)

Lastly, the model contract provides that "foreign workers are to be treated like comparable German workers" (adding, however, the important proviso "unless German law contains special regulations for foreigners"); that they are to be indemnified like German workers for time lost on account of air-raid warnings; and that any legal action arising out of this contract must be brought before the competent German law court.<sup>1</sup>

Model contracts were not made public for all branches of industry. The model contract for the "recruitment" of chemical firms, for example, was not published. It was, however, made known that if German employers "have to fill orders placed by the Commissioner-General for Special Problems in the Chemical Industry, they are allowed to make agreements with foreign chemical undertakings in order to get entire foreign undertakings transferred to Germany".

If a German employer who wished to make such an arrangement with a foreign employer did not possess the necessary business connections, he was encouraged to ask the labour office of his own district to take the initial steps for him. In such cases the foreign agencies of the Reich Ministry of Labour proceeded with the "recruitment of foreign undertakings". They acted, however, only as intermediaries; once they had established contact between a particular German and a particular foreign firm, the final arrange-

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<sup>1</sup> *Der Ausländische Arbeiter in Deutschland* (a loose-leaf collection of official regulations concerning foreign labour and official comments on them, published in Berlin from 1941 onwards), pp. 124-126.



ments had to be made in the form of a contract between the German and the foreign undertaking.<sup>1</sup>

A Decree by the Reich Minister of Labour of 14 October 1941 stated, for example, that owing to lack of personal contacts between German and Belgian industrialists, too few Belgian construction undertakings had been transplanted to Germany. The Reich Minister of Labour, in agreement with the Military Commander of Belgium and northern France and with the Director-General of Construction Work, therefore ordered the German labour offices in Belgium to bring Belgian construction firms and German industrialists into contact. As a matter of principle, permits to employ Belgian firms might be given only in cases of recognised urgency (for otherwise the restrictions concerning new construction could be circumvented by employing Belgian construction firms). A German employer who wished to secure the services of a Belgian construction firm made his application to the labour office of his own district which, if it found no objection, forwarded the application to the Military Commander of Belgium and northern France. The Military Commander then "sought to recruit" suitable Belgian undertakings. Belgian industrialists were given opportunities to travel to Germany, in order to inspect the place of work and learn about the nature of the project, and to come to terms with the German employers. These arrangements, to become effective, needed the consent of the Labour Office and the local representative of the Director-General of Construction Work. Employers were advised to follow closely the conditions laid down in the model contract of the chemical industry. Once the agreement between the two employers was signed, the Military Commander in Belgium and northern France recruited the necessary manpower, provided for their medical examination, and had the workers transported to Germany in the usual manner.<sup>2</sup>

The regulations issued by the Reich Minister of Labour, in agreement with the Supreme Command of the *Wehrmacht*, concerning the transplantation of French armament plants to Germany, were more detailed than those concerning the Belgian construction undertakings. In this case the Reich Minister of Labour determined which German plants should be allowed to employ an entire French metal plant. The Supreme Commander of the

<sup>1</sup> BIRKENHOLZ, in *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 84.

<sup>2</sup> *Ausländische Arbeiter*, pp. 126-128. In 1942, the German labour offices and the representatives abroad of the Reich Ministry of Labour acted mainly as intermediaries between German and Belgian construction firms (BIRKENHOLZ, in *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 84). Whole building firms were, however, transferred to Germany from other countries too. For example, the Italian newspaper *Il Messaggero* of 16 Apr. 1942 mentioned the transfer of 40 Italian construction firms to Germany.

*Wehrmacht* and the Reich Minister of Armament and Munitions were authorised to make proposals to this effect to the Reich Minister of Labour. If the selected German undertaking desired to avail itself of the opportunity, it submitted a detailed application to the labour office of its own district. Unless the labour office raised an objection, it forwarded the application to the Section for the Recruitment of Undertakings in the Department for Labour Allocation, which was part of the administrative staff of the Military Commander in France. The Section for the Recruitment of Undertakings was headed by a "personality fully familiar with French economy and maintaining personal relations with French industry". Negotiations concerning the transplantation of French firms were conducted in Paris between the French employer and the chief of the Section for the Recruitment of Undertakings, in the presence of the German employer concerned.

Before transporting his workers to Germany, the French employer was required to submit a detailed list containing the qualifications of every worker; the chief of the Section for Recruitment of Undertakings had the right to verify these data. Medical examination was also in the hands of the Department for Labour Allocation of the Military Commander. The German firm for which the French undertaking was destined, provided escorts, if necessary, and paid the travelling expenses to the place of work. In addition, every transport had to be accompanied by a French escort.<sup>1</sup>

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In order to encourage the transfer of undertakings (together with their workers) from Denmark to Germany, a German-Danish agreement was concluded on 24 February 1942.<sup>2</sup> Under its terms Danish workers employed by an undertaking which had its seat in the Kingdom of Denmark, but was working in the Reich as a transplanted firm, continued to enjoy the benefits of Danish accident insurance. The Reich undertook to pay compensation for accidents due to war events which these workers might suffer on German soil.

In the later stages of the war, the extent and direction of the transfer of machines and equipment from German-occupied countries to the Reich or to other German-occupied countries depended on the course of military events. As the war drew towards its close,

<sup>1</sup> *Ausländische Arbeiter*, pp. 84, 129-132.

<sup>2</sup> Promulgated by the Reich Minister of Labour on 24 February 1942; *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, Part II, p. 416. Cf. also Decree by the Reich Minister of Labour of 26 March 1943; *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 15, Apr. 1943, Part II, p. 16.

more machinery was moved. In January 1945, for example, it was reported that in northern Italy the Germans continued their methodical efforts to dismantle Italian industrial equipment and to remove it to the Bolzano region in the South Tyrol, to the Valtellina Valley in the Italian Alps, and across the Brenner Pass into Austria and Germany.<sup>1</sup>

### IN THE EAST

Significantly different methods for the exploitation of industrial capacity were used in the eastern occupied territories. Whereas in the West the programme was based, formally at least, on voluntary contracts made between individual German and individual foreign firms, the productive capacities of the eastern occupied territories were brought into the orbit of the German economy by direct action.

In the Government-General, German wholesale merchants and German industry were allowed to organise autonomously (in the case of industry through the "creation of monopolistic agencies") the utilisation of the industrial resources of the territory.<sup>2</sup>

Thus, in the words of the organ of the Rhine and Ruhr industry, the *Deutsche Bergwerks-Zeitung*, the Government-General served as a "testing ground for the colonial activity of the Third Reich". The methods first tested in the Government-General were later applied to the conquered regions of the Soviet Union.<sup>3</sup> When the armies of the Third Reich invaded the industrialised regions of the Soviet Union various organisations of German undertakings (*Industrielle Wirtschaftsgruppen* and *Fachgruppen*)<sup>4</sup>, set up special "East committees" on the basis of the experience gained in Poland (*Ostausschüsse*). These "East committees were always composed of only a few members, and their chairman was always a leading industrialist in the particular field".

The functions of the "East committees" were: (a) "to administer the plants and shops taken over in the eastern territories"; (b) to ascertain the requirements of these plants and shops in manpower, raw material and machines; (c) to select employers and specialists "who are qualified for the East"; and (d) to supervise "the erection of branches of German firms which are to take over plants in the East". "In this manner German industry autonomously directs the supply of materials and personnel for eastern industry" and

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<sup>1</sup> *Christian Science Monitor*, 3 Jan. 1945.

<sup>2</sup> Editorial, "Stetige wirtschaftliche Entwicklung des Generalgouvernements", in *Deutsche Bergwerks-Zeitung*, 5 Jan. 1943.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> See p. 20.

the industrial reconstruction of the German-occupied parts of the Soviet Union was organised by a system of "determined decentralisation", namely, through independent action by the various branches of German industry.<sup>1</sup>

The policy of germanisation in the German-annexed parts of Poland is illustrated by the changes that took place in Upper Silesian heavy industry.

Almost all the mines in the area became the property of the German State. In particular, the Hermann Göring Works took over the mines formerly belonging to the Polish firms *Wspolnota Interesow* (Community of Interests) and *Skarboferm*, the mines in Brzeszcz and Jawiskowice, formerly the property of the Polish State, the Hohenlohe industrial establishments, belonging to Petschek, and the *Rybnickie Gwarectwo Weglowe*. The *Trzyniec* foundries, formerly belonging to the French Schneider-Creuzot interests, became the property of the Bohemian Union Bank of Prague, which was a branch of the German Bank in Berlin. The *Pokoj* foundry and the *Rudzkie Gwarectwo Weglowe*, which, for many years belonged to the Polish State, returned to their former owner, the German Ballestrom firm in Gleiwitz. Even before the war this firm had been transformed into the firm of *Oberhütte*, which was dependent on the German State. The *Wspolnota Interesow* foundries were for a long period held in trusteeship by the Röchling interests of the Saar, but (at the end of 1941) they came under the direct administration of the central *Haupttreuhandstelle Ost* at Berlin (the central agency for the germanisation of industrial property, headed by Heinrich Himmler), as negotiations for Röchling to acquire the foundries fell through. The Silesian Mines and Zincworks, Ltd., returned to their former owners, the Silesian Foundry and Mining Works at Bytom. The *Pszczyna* mines, with the addition of further capital provided by the *I.G. Farbenindustrie* of Frankfurt on Main, and the aid of a large loan provided by the German Bank, were rendered dependent on the German State.

Out of the 3,500 to 4,000 industrial establishments in the Lodz area, 300 to 400 survived the German war against Poland. Of these remaining enterprises, by the middle of 1941, the Lodz *Treuhandstelle* department (a subsidiary of the Berlin central office for the germanisation of industries) had already managed to "sell" to Germans 211 wool mills and 39 cotton goods factories.

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<sup>1</sup> *Deutsche Bergwerks-Zeitung*, 5 Jan. 1943. "In contrast thereto", the report added, "the activities of [German] wholesale and export trade in the East were organised, in a centralised manner, through the 'East Department' (*Ostreferat*) of the Reich Group 'Commerce'".

The *Ostdeutscher Beobachter* of 27 August 1941 reported that out of the 153,700 workers in Lodz before the war, 80,000 had been carried off to Germany for agricultural work.<sup>1</sup>

Although German sources have published very little information on the organisation of the confiscated industrial plants and on German economic activities in the occupied eastern territories, in May 1943 the German press mentioned the existence of Ukrainian branch undertakings, with headquarters in Kiev, of such German firms as the Friedrich Krupp and *Vereinigte Stahlwerke A.G.*, and the Mannesmann Röhren Co. Ltd.

Three distinct phases can be recognised in German policy in the occupied eastern areas. The first phase was characterised by systematic deindustrialisation; many of the territories east of the German-annexed parts of pre-war Poland were stripped of the machinery which could be used in German factories. The second phase was in sharp contrast to this policy. With the intensification of aerial warfare against the old Reich territory, a programme of large-scale reindustrialisation was carried out in certain regions of the former Republic of Poland and of the Ukraine. However, even during the first phase, apart from the deportation of workers, Germany made use of the local population on a large scale, particularly during the period of preparation for war against the Soviet Union. In the spring of 1941, for example, the "intensified continuation of war-essential measures" (mainly construction of a network of strategic highways and railways) led, for a while, to an almost complete exhaustion of the manpower reserves, including the small peasants in the Government-General.<sup>2</sup> During the phase of reindustrialisation, not only equipment, but also large contingents of German and foreign workers, had to be transported to the occupied eastern territories.

Thirdly, when the Germans retreated from the East, the systematic removal of machines and equipment westward was largely carried out by the same "East committees" and "East companies" (*Ostgesellschaften*) which had been founded<sup>3</sup>

to organise the administration of the occupied eastern territories in a decentralised manner. This decentralisation is also maintained during the phase of liquidation, by assigning to these corporations the task of liquidation, autonomously, but under the control of the authorities.

From regions where the withdrawal was prepared long in advance, plants together with their machinery and workers were often transplanted almost in their entirety to localities in the rear. As a rule, however, the machines, goods

<sup>1</sup> *Polish Fortnightly Review*, published by the Polish Ministry of Information (London), No. 37, 1 Feb. 1942, pp. 4-5.

<sup>2</sup> TIMM: *Der Einsatz ausländischer Arbeitskräfte in Deutschland*, p. 57.

<sup>3</sup> "Abwicklung des Treuhandvermögens in den besetzten Ostgebieten", in *Deutsche Bergwerks-Zeitung*, 13 Aug. 1944.

and raw materials salvaged during the evacuation were removed item by item, and distributed to plants in the more remote occupied regions or in the Fatherland, according to the urgency, from the standpoint of war production, of their needs.<sup>1</sup>

All firms participating in this distribution scheme (they were called receivers of "removed goods"—*Räumungsgut*) had to make special applications. Loot not distributed in this way was sold for cash, at prices determined by official valuation.<sup>2</sup>

Apart from these sales, however, it is noteworthy that no emphasis was laid on strict accounting for removed goods. It was pointed out that the "financial liquidation" should be determined by the fact that no private property had existed in those territories up to the time of the German occupation; and that, with the exception of the private German undertakings organised during the occupation, the plants had been administered on behalf of the Reich by commissioners, trustees and lessees, and were therefore to be considered as special economic assets of the Reich. These persons were given to understand that they would not be asked to render accounts, on the ground that to do so would be a waste of manpower:

As administrators of another's<sup>3</sup> assets the trustees owe to the Reich an accounting of their management in so far as they are able to do so on the basis of salvaged documents; but from the standpoint of an efficient manpower policy it would be irresponsible to undertake *post-factum* precise auditing, which would only be of theoretical value. In order to simplify and accelerate the liquidation, it was therefore decided to waive, and for the future as well, the demand for complete final balance sheets of the various undertakings, for the settlement of outstanding debts between undertakings run by trustees, and for statements showing from which undertakings the goods evacuated and sold were derived.

Careful accounting must however be forthcoming in the settlement of the claims and debts of the undertakings run by trustees vis à vis outside firms, especially contractors and customers of the Reich. As a matter of fact these outsiders can in principle make claims only against the assets of the individual eastern undertakings and not against the administration of eastern economic affairs as a whole, or against the Reich Treasury, on behalf of which the administration was conducted. But for reasons of fairness, steps will be taken in the liquidation process to satisfy outside firms which possess claims because they have, through supplying goods or credits, contributed to the development of German economy in the East, even if the undertakings which were run on public trust eventually wind up their affairs with a loss.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This movement was supervised by Government delegates appointed jointly by the Ministries of Economic Affairs, and of Armament and Munitions.

<sup>2</sup> *Deutsche Bergwerks-Zeitung*, 13 Aug. 1944.

<sup>3</sup> Namely, the Reich's.

<sup>4</sup> *Deutsche Bergwerks-Zeitung*, 13 Aug. 1944.

## CHAPTER V

### THE NUMBERS INVOLVED

Scarcity of official information is not the only difficulty in attempting to estimate the numbers involved in Germany's exploitation of foreign manpower. Another and confusing factor is the very divergent use of the same terms in the available data. Moreover, the available figures fall into true perspective and can be correctly appreciated only if they are placed in the general framework of German war policy.

(1) The first difficulty is the definition of the term "foreign worker" and of the term "Germany". In answering the questions "who is a foreign worker?" and "what is German?", the German sources which form the basis for most estimates start from premises not accepted by or acceptable to the United Nations. A further complication is the fact that neither the German nor the non-German computations have always been consistent in the use of the terms.

(a) Before the first shot of the war was fired, Germany had already increased its territory by incorporating Austria, the Sudeten region of Czechoslovakia, the Free City of Danzig and the region of Memel (populations approximately 7,000,000, 3,000,000, 400,000 and 150,000 respectively) thus increasing its population from about 69,600,000 to about 80,150,000. Like the other assets of these occupied regions, the productive capacities of their workers were used throughout the war to further the German war effort. Under international law and under the domestic law of these territories before their annexation, as well as according to the future map of Europe, all these workers were "foreign workers". But immediately after occupying these regions, Germany changed by decree the citizenship of their inhabitants (with very few exceptions) to German citizenship. Thereafter, German legislation applied to these persons. They were subject to German labour laws, military service, labour service, etc., like other German

nationals. In the official German statistics they have never been considered as "foreign workers".

(b) "Rump" Czechoslovakia (pre-1938 Czechoslovakia minus the Sudeten region and Slovakia, with a population of approximately 10,900,000) was occupied by Germany in March 1939 and called the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. While not completely incorporated in the Third Reich, this region, which is highly industrialised and rich in raw materials and agriculture, has often been dealt with in German statistics as if it had been fully incorporated. The workers of this part of Czechoslovakia were either compelled to work for Germany within their own country, or were transported for work to Germany or to other parts of German-dominated Europe. German statistics often referred to them as a special group of foreigners, but quite frequently considered them as a section of German labour. In the latter case they are not included among "foreign workers".<sup>1</sup>

(c) After its first military successes, Germany incorporated Alsace-Lorraine (population approximately 1,900,000), the region of Eupen and Malmédy (population approximately 60,000), the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg (population approximately 300,000), and Western Poland (population approximately 10,000,000) into the Reich. Inhabitants of those regions who were considered German were granted various types of German nationality. Their number is difficult to estimate, but probably amounted to at least 2 to 3 million. Again, from the standpoint of international and domestic law, and in the eyes of the United Nations, they are foreigners. However, like the inhabitants of the occupied regions already mentioned, they have, with minor exceptions, been covered by general German laws and have not been included among "foreign workers".

(d) According to National Socialist theory, citizens of non-German countries who for biological or political reasons were claimed by the National Socialists to be Germans, should be considered as such, regardless of their non-German citizenship. During the war Germany was able to translate this theory into reality, and declared probably between 2 to 3 million citizens of countries other than Germany to be German nationals. These persons again added to the sum total of "German" manpower and are not included in the statistics of foreign labour.

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<sup>1</sup> According to official estimates made by the Czechoslovak Government in London, approximately 200,000 Czechs and 120,000 Slovaks (exclusive of seasonal workers) had been moved out of pre-1938 Czechoslovakia by the end of 1941. By 1943, their number had increased to approximately 600,000 (*Report on Czechoslovak Workers in Germany*, Part I, p. 6).



Thus, by adding Austrians, Czechs, Frenchmen, Belgians, Poles, and "racial" Germans of various other countries, Germany increased its population by at least 14 million (and in so far as "rump" Czechoslovakia was considered as a part of Germany, by at least 25 million).

German wartime policy compelled the employable portion of these groups to work for the German war effort, either inside or outside their home countries. Although they are not listed as "foreign workers", these persons present various problems that will call for solution after the war.

(2) The extraordinary circumstances of the war enabled Germany, in many parts of Europe and for several years, to use many millions of non-German workers for the German war effort, without removing them from their own countries.

All over Europe, laws introducing compulsory labour service in the interest of Germany were issued, partly by the German authorities themselves, and partly under German pressure.

This implied the removal of millions of workers from their usual places of residence, either within their own countries or to other countries under German domination. Throughout the years of German domination of Europe, there was a huge and continuous shifting and displacement of persons under German orders.<sup>1</sup>

For example, according to estimates based on reliable sources<sup>2</sup>, only 2,000 Norwegians were working in Germany in January 1944; but Frolich-Hansen, head of the Norwegian Labour Service, announced that, during 1944, the number of Norwegian girls conscripted to work for the Germans in Norway (mainly road-building to the Swedish frontier) was to be increased from 20,000 to 40,000. The number of Norwegian women employed in Norway for the German war effort would therefore have been 10 to 20 times greater than the number of Norwegian men and women working in Germany proper at the beginning of 1944.

It must always be kept in mind that, however great the number of persons transported to Germany, probably still more were deported, not to Germany, but to other parts of their own countries or to other occupied territories.

These persons again were not counted as "foreign workers". But it is interesting to remember that, after the First World War, the Belgian Government claimed indemnities from Germany not only for Belgian workers deported to Germany but also for those

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Eugene M. KULISCHER, *op. cit.*, *passim*.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *International Labour Review*, Vol. L, No. 4, Oct. 1944, p. 470.

forced by the Germans to go to northern France or to move within Belgium.<sup>1</sup>

(3) Published German statistics do not usually take into account those non-Germans who were forcibly removed from their home countries, not as civilian workers, but as political deportees and racial deportees. Racial deportees (persons who, according to National Socialist standards, were considered as Jews) were also forced to work. As to the number of political deportees, Mr. Henri Fresnay, Minister for Prisoners of War, Deported Persons and Refugees in the French Provisional Government, declared in the late autumn of 1944 that 600,000 political deportees must be presumed to have been taken to Germany from France alone.<sup>2</sup> Most of the political deportees were forced to work for Germany at their places of destination. Percentages (which are difficult to estimate) were, after shorter or longer periods of detention, released as "free" foreign civilian workers in Germany.

(4) In the course of the war the German authorities, from time to time, changed the status of prisoners of war into that of civilian foreign workers. In the case of Frenchmen, for instance, this was done under agreements between the German and the Vichy authorities. In other cases, for example, with respect to Soviet and Polish prisoners of war, it was done by unilateral action. These changes in status would apply to great numbers of persons. On the other hand, the German authorities also, though much less frequently, reclassified as prisoners of war certain groups whom they had at an earlier date released. These changes of status also affect the statistics of foreign civilian workers.

(5) One more consideration has to be taken into account. Most figures concerning deported workers refer to a given date or period of time. Such estimates, however carefully made, can only indicate

<sup>1</sup> The Belgian Government took the view that not only Belgians deported to Germany, but also Belgians "who had to do forced labour [for Germany] or were removed [on German orders] either into the interior of the country [Belgium] or from Belgium into France—as happened in the frontier regions—fell under the same category as those who were deported into Germany" (quoted from Part I, Chapter VI, entitled "Remunérations aux déportés" of *Mémoire sur les dommages de guerre subis par la Belgique*, submitted to the Reparations Commission). The Reparations Commission accepted this Belgian claim as one to be honoured by Germany under No. 8 of Annex I of Part VIII of the Treaty of Versailles (indemnification for violence against whole portions of the civilian population). (See decision of the Belgian-German Mixed Arbitral Tribunal in the case of *Jules-Hector Loriaux v. Etat allemand*, of 5 April 1922, *Recueil des décisions des tribunaux arbitraux mixtes*, 4th year, 1924-25, p. 684.) See also Appendix VIII.

<sup>2</sup> The conditions in the German prisons, concentration and punitive labour camps, in and outside Germany, were notoriously inhumane, with a correspondingly high death rate among their inmates. In the later stages of the war, censorship was particularly rigorous on this subject. However, the Swedish press reported from Norway in the autumn of 1944 "harsher treatment of prisoners by the S.S. guards, deaths by torture, suicides after Gestapo examinations, and increasingly horrible conditions in prisons and concentration camps generally".

the number of workers employed at any given time. But the number of foreign workers was constantly depleted, first by deaths (including suicides), secondly, by authorised returns (on account of sickness, incapacity or termination of contracts), thirdly, by authorised returns for a limited time, after which, however, the foreigners often failed to return<sup>1</sup>, and, fourthly, by unauthorised returns (escape, "desertion"). The system here discussed extended over several years. It must be assumed that the number of foreign workers in Germany, unless constantly replaced, decreased through deaths, escapes and returns at a rate of 10-15 per cent. per year.

No official figures of death rates and turnover have been given by Germany, but sometimes comparison of figures is revealing. For example, Dr. Syrup, Secretary of State in the Reich Ministry of Labour, stated in an article published in the official organ of that Ministry in the summer of 1941<sup>2</sup> that "at present" 873,000 workers from former Poland were employed in the Reich. But the *Kölnische Zeitung* reported as early as 11 October 1940 that, during 1940, 950,000 Poles (550,000 agricultural and 400,000 industrial workers) had been sent into the interior of the Reich.<sup>3</sup> Thus the *Kölnische Zeitung's* figure is 77,000 higher than that given more than half a year later by Dr. Syrup, although it does not take into account importation of Polish labour during the last months of 1939, or during the period from October 1940 to the summer of 1941.

In computing the estimate concerning the number of foreign workers in Germany in January 1944, the *International Labour Review* assumed<sup>4</sup> that of the 1,200,000 Poles who, until October 1943, had been moved from the Government-General to Germany<sup>5</sup> (plus those Poles moved from there between October 1943 and January 1944)<sup>6</sup>, only 900,000 could still be expected to be alive and be at work in Germany in January 1944.

<sup>1</sup> Out of 72,000 French "voluntary" workers who had been given temporary leave from Germany, 57,000 were reported not to have returned (*Journal français de Genève*, 6 May 1944; *International Labour Review*, loc. cit., p. 474).

<sup>2</sup> Reprinted from *Reichsarbeitsblatt* in condensed form in *Soziale Praxis*, 1 Aug. 1941, p. 609.

<sup>3</sup> Quoted in *Polish White Book*, p. 195.

<sup>4</sup> Loc. cit., p. 471.

<sup>5</sup> Up to 1 April 1942, 655,000 Poles had been sent to Germany from the Government-General (*Sozialpolitische Weltrundschau*, Part 2; Ministry of Labour, Berlin, 1 May 1942). In October 1943, the *Deutsche Stimme* (Munich) stated that up to that date the Government-General had supplied the Reich (i.e., apart from Poles working in the Government-General for Germany) with 1,200,000 Poles.

<sup>6</sup> In October 1943, the *Deutsche Stimme* stated that "owing to the urgent needs of the Government-General, manpower reserves are no longer available in its towns". Yet reliable reports of December 1943 stated that "recently, some tens of thousands of Polish workers, mainly from Lodz, were deported to the Reich". The *Wiesci Polskie* (Budapest) of 14 January 1944 reported that 24,000 Polish workers had recently been sent to the Ruhr basin for industrial work.

Yet the *Deutsche Kohlen-Zeitung* of 8 February 1944 acknowledged that it had

To summarise: the number of civilian non-German workers who, at any given time during the war, were employed in Germany represents only a part of the total number of persons deported by Germany for work in the interest of its war effort; and is also considerably smaller than the sum total of foreigners imported into Germany for work during the whole duration of the war.

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It does not fall within the scope of the present study to determine the number of persons moved to Germany or German-occupied countries in order to work for the German war effort. The figures available up to the middle of 1943 have been analysed in another publication of the International Labour Office<sup>1</sup> and supplemented by more recent data published in the *International Labour Review*.<sup>2</sup> For present purposes, the following remarks concerning the numerical size of the problem appear pertinent.

Nine months before the outbreak of hostilities Dr. Syrup estimated that Germany would need an additional 250,000 industrial and 750,000 agricultural workers.<sup>3</sup>

Although the war broke out in 1939 a few weeks later in the year than in 1914, the lack of manpower in German agriculture was considerably greater than in 1914, because the concentrated armament programme under the four-year plan had deprived German agriculture of many hands. In September 1939, the number of non-German citizens employed in Germany either as migratory or permanent, wage-earning or salaried employees as well as independent workers, was officially estimated at about 500,000<sup>4</sup>, of whom about 120,000 were employed in German agriculture.<sup>5</sup>

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formerly been easy to obtain labourers from the Government-General but that "in the course of time, this great reservoir of human beings has been exhausted by the heavy demands made on it", and that therefore "the prospects of acquiring more workers from there are comparatively small". But the article stressed that Germany "must go on trying to obtain suitable workers from the Government-General, so that we shall have at least a slight chance of coping with the increasing manpower shortage in the coal industry".

<sup>1</sup> Eugene KULISCHER, *op. cit.*, pp. 122 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *International Labour Review*, *loc. cit.*, pp. 469-480.

<sup>3</sup> "Die Etappen des Arbeitseinsatzes", in *Soziale Praxis*, 1 Jan. 1939, p. 14; WILLEKE, in *Jahrbücher für Nationalökonomie und Statistik*, Sept. 1941, p. 312, note 1.

<sup>4</sup> Dr. TIMM, in his report to the Labour Administration Conference of September 1942. This figure has usually been accepted by German and non-German official publications. But it must be remembered that the figure is not unequivocal, since it is not clear whether Dr. Timm referred to the German Reich territory before or after the annexations of Austria, the Sudeten regions and "rump" Czechoslovakia, or considered Austrians and Sudeteners as German citizens.

<sup>5</sup> Dr. SYRUP, *loc. cit.*

In the spring of 1941 (before Germany started war on the Soviet Union), the number of foreigners employed in Germany was estimated by one official writer at 1,650,000 civilian workers (of whom 1,350,000 were men), plus approximately 1,400,000 employed prisoners of war.<sup>1</sup> This source did not indicate the nationality of the prisoners of war, but broke up the civilians into the following chief contingents: Poles (873,000); Czechs (150,000); Italians (132,000); Netherlanders (90,000); Belgians (87,000); and Slovaks (69,000).<sup>2</sup> The number of civilians transported to Germany continued to rise. Soviet labour was recruited from the very beginning of the Soviet-German war.<sup>3</sup>

As already observed, the number of foreign workers increased particularly after Fritz Sauckel had been appointed Commissioner-General for Manpower (March 1942). The *Frankfurter Zeitung* of 15 September 1942 stated that "owing to the efforts of Sauckel and his staff", the number of foreign workers increased within the first six months after his appointment "from 3½ millions, including prisoners of war, to 5½ millions, and, indeed, to nearly 6 millions".<sup>4</sup> The pace was even more rapid after the autumn of 1942. For example, in October and November 1942, it was officially stated that the German armament programme "made demands on manpower which simply could not be solved by the usual bureaucratic administrative methods" and which in fact "seemed insoluble".<sup>5</sup> At Christmas 1942, Sauckel said that 17 per cent. of all industrial workers in Germany were foreigners.<sup>6</sup> Six weeks later,

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<sup>1</sup> It must be noted that the number of *employed* prisoners of war is lower than their total figures. This is due to three causes: appropriate employment is not always found for them; some prisoners of war are not fit for work; and according to Sec. 27 of the Convention relative to the treatment of prisoners of war, of 27 July 1929 (the "Geneva Convention"), officers and prisoners of equivalent status may not be compelled to work unless they volunteer for "suitable work". Non-commissioned officers who are prisoners of war may be compelled to undertake only supervisory work unless they expressly request remunerative occupation. The Soviet Union was not a party to the Geneva Convention and the Germans, according to reliable reports, often compelled Soviet officers to work, although this was contrary to the Fourth Hague Convention of 1899 and 1907.

<sup>2</sup> It is to be noted that this official estimate does not mention French civilian workers among the "main contingents" employed in Germany in the spring of 1941.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. "Soviet Workers in Germany", in *International Labour Review*, Vol. XLVII, No. 5, May 1943, pp. 576-590.

<sup>4</sup> The Reich Minister of Labour gave a much lower total for all foreign civilians employed in Germany, namely, 2,138,360 at the end of June 1942 (*Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 1942, No. 15, Part V, p. 284). These discrepancies, as said before, are due to a different system of computation; for example, by applying a different concept of "foreign workers", such as by considering the more than 200,000 Czech workers who at that time were employed in Germany as Germans, or by not taking into account the foreign civilians working at that time in Austria and/or Czechoslovakia (without Slovakia), etc.

<sup>5</sup> Editorial in *Arbeitseinsatz und Arbeitslosenhilfe*, No. 1-2, Jan. 1943.

<sup>6</sup> *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, 25 Dec. 1942.

he stated that in Europe's armament industries, in and outside the Reich, more than two thirds of the workers were non-Germans.<sup>1</sup> The Netherlands Ministry of Social Affairs at the Hague estimated that, during 1942, 170,797 Netherlands were sent abroad.<sup>2</sup>

Between the spring and early December of 1942, 110 new German labour offices were opened in the Ukraine alone.<sup>3</sup> At that time Soviet workers were poured into German industry at the rate of 15,000 to 20,000 a day. In all, about two million "Eastern" workers are reported to have been sent to Germany only in 1942.<sup>4</sup> In May 1943, the region (*Gau*) of Southern Hanover-Brunswick with, according to the 1939 census, a population of 2,137,000, had no fewer than 300,000 foreign workers.<sup>5</sup> The city of Linz in Upper Austria (pre-war population, including the vicinity, 129,000) housed, in July 1943, 168,000 foreign workers, according to German estimates.

Early in 1943, German and non-German sources estimated the number of foreign workers in Germany at, variously, between 6 and 8 millions.<sup>6</sup>

But on 30 June 1943, Fritz Sauckel stated that the number of foreign workers employed in the German economy had increased from 500,000 in 1939 to 12,100,000 at the end of May 1943, including prisoners of war put to work.<sup>7</sup> It was explained<sup>8</sup> that this figure, while including employed prisoners of war, did not include foreigners used for German war purposes beyond the frontiers of Greater Germany.

This report was variously interpreted outside Germany. The *Economist* (London) of 10 July 1943, on the basis of a careful analysis, reached the conclusion that at that time "in Greater Germany it is possible that 8 or 9 millions out of a total of 28.1 million are foreign workers—roughly one third".

The *Arbeiterzeitung* (Schaffhausen, Switzerland) of 3 July 1943

<sup>1</sup> *Trans-Ocean*, 9 Feb. 1943.

<sup>2</sup> Survey by J. A. KNETSCH, Chief of the Employment Section of the (Hague) Ministry for Social Affairs, quoted in *Deutsche Zeitung in den Niederlanden*, 12 Feb. 1943. The same German-dominated paper wrote on 6 March 1943: "Although the Netherlands has been at war for three years, the magnificent buildings of banks, shipping companies, and overseas trading companies are still crowded with employees who do nothing but wait for the return of overseas business. They will be given work in the Netherlands, the Reich, or other occupied countries. Although 300,000 Netherlands are at present working in Germany, Netherlands labour reserves are still larger than those of Germany." (See Appendix IV.)

<sup>3</sup> *Deutsches Nachrichten Bureau*, 11 Dec. 1942.

<sup>4</sup> *Monatshefte für N S-Sozialpolitik*, No. 23-24, Dec. 1942, quoted in *International Labour Review*, Vol. XLVII, No. 5, May 1943, p. 577.

<sup>5</sup> *Hanoversche Zeitung*, 8-9 May 1943.

<sup>6</sup> Eugene M. KULISCHER, *op. cit.*, p. 129, note 6.

<sup>7</sup> *Deutsche Bergwerks-Zeitung*, 1 July 1943.

<sup>8</sup> *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, 30 June 1943.

accepted the figure of 12 million foreigners employed in German industry and agriculture, including French prisoners of war, as of 31 May 1943. If, it argued, the employable men and women of all age groups in Germany at that time numbered approximately 47 millions, and, roughly, 10 millions of them were in the German armed forces and 10 millions in agriculture, then about 26 million men and women were available for the armament industries and war-essential enterprises of all kinds. This figure of approximately 26 millions included, the *Arbeiterzeitung* estimated, approximately 10 million foreigners, whereas the remaining 2 million foreigners were included in the approximately 10 million agricultural workers.<sup>1</sup>

In a survey published on 6 February 1944, the Soviet trade union organ *Trud* reproduced, without challenging it, the figure of 12.1 million civilians and prisoners of war employed in Greater Germany in May 1943, and stated that the number had meantime increased. The article emphasised the fact that, according to German sources, the increase of foreign manpower in Germany was comparatively greater in industry than in agriculture.

#### INCREASE OF NUMBERS OF FOREIGN WORKERS IN GERMANY<sup>2</sup>

(in thousands)

Year	War industries	Agriculture	Total
1941.....	1,300	1,700	3,000
1942.....	2,800	2,000	4,800
1943 (Jan. to May).....	1,200	750	1,950
Total increase between Jan. 1941 and May 1943.....	5,300	4,450	9,750

In any case, it must be assumed that the figure of 12.1 million claimed by the Commissioner-General for Manpower was reached by using the broadest definitions, that is, by including foreigners employed not only in the old territory of Germany, but also in annexed territories and most probably also in the German-occupied countries (Todt workers). Owing to the domestic and military situation of Germany at any given period, the official National Socialist propaganda found it advisable at times to impress the German public with the enormous size of foreign manpower working for the German war effort, while, at other times, it tried to quiet misgivings about the potential danger of this policy and "reduced" the number by as much as several million. It appears

<sup>1</sup> According to Eugene M. KULISCHER, *op. cit.* (third printing, Jan. 1945, corrigenda on p. 171), the figure of 12 million foreign workers included foreigners and native workers employed in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, and in the Government-General.

<sup>2</sup> *Trud* (Moscow), 6 Feb. 1944, quoting *Essener National-Zeitung*, 16 July 1943.

that Sauckel's figure of 12.1 million for the end of May 1943 was not only a boast about his own "achievements" but was also intended to calm the alarm caused in Germany by the increasingly ruthless efforts of the régime to mobilise the last available German manpower for the armed forces and for war industries.

Large-scale displacements of foreign workers continued throughout the later stages of the war.<sup>1</sup> On account of the intensified bombing of Germany, many factories were transferred from the Reich to other parts of Europe still under German domination. Accordingly, considerable numbers of foreign workers were shifted. For example, despite the continued recruitment of foreign workers, the *Essener National-Zeitung* of 20 January 1944 indicated that at that date only 10 million foreigners were living in Germany and working "side by side with Germans for the preservation and security of life in Europe".

It would appear, however, that the lower figure of 10 millions included approximately 1,300,000 non-German workers employed outside Greater Germany (*i.e.*, the old Reich, plus the territories incorporated since March 1938, but excluding the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia and the Government-General). According to estimates made by the International Labour Office, at the beginning of 1944, approximately 8,670,000 foreign workers (6,450,000 civilian workers and 2,220,000 employed war prisoners) were working within the area of Greater Germany.<sup>2</sup> The available evidence suggests that subsequently this figure was considerably increased.

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It must again be emphasised that the discrepancies between the various numerical estimates are due to different definitions of "foreign workers" and to the larger or smaller territory considered.<sup>3</sup> This explains, for example, the seeming discrepancy between the International Labour Office's estimate of 8,600,000 foreign workers in January 1944, and the estimate made by the International Federation of Trade Unions for late September 1944<sup>4</sup>, putting the number of foreigners ("forced labour, prisoners of war, repatriated Germans, etc.") as high as "up to 15 millions".

It is safe to assume that ever since the mobilisation of foreign

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix IV.

<sup>2</sup> For a short explanation of these figures, territory by territory, see Appendix IV.

<sup>3</sup> Even if the statistics for the various periods did not show an absolute increase, considerable fresh contingents of workers had to be recruited in order to replace the decreases due to deaths, returns, and "desertions".

<sup>4</sup> *Bulletin of the International Federation of Trade Unions*, 1 Oct. 1944, p. 8.



manpower was fully developed (that is, since 1942), the number of non-Germans employed in the German war effort has exceeded the number of persons serving in all branches of the German armed forces.

The figures are even higher if account is taken of foreigners working under non-German employers in German-dominated countries, and foreigners, who since the autumn of 1939, after working in or for Germany, died, became disabled, or were for other reasons eliminated from the foreign labour force employed by the Germans during the later stages of the war. In order to form an accurate picture of German manpower policy during the war and the problems created by it, all these categories of foreigners must be taken into account. Indeed, in a full appraisal of Germany's wartime exploitation of foreigners, dependent family members and survivors of the conscripted workers must also be counted among those adversely affected by it. The effects of German policy will continue even after the end of the war for those whose providers died or were disabled, as well as for the children who suffered through the forced disruption of family life and, finally, for those who, in this enormous displacement of populations, have lost sight of their families. If the dependent family members who will still be directly affected by this policy after the war are added to the number of workers who during the various phases of the war were put to work for the German war effort, at a conservative estimate, a figure is reached of 30 to 35 millions.

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## CHAPTER VI

### THE DISTRIBUTION OF FOREIGN WORKERS

The policy of strict centralisation and close control by Government and Party, which had been followed from the beginning in the recruitment of workers in foreign countries, was equally followed inside Germany. Throughout the war, the authorities strove to keep in their own hands the assessment of the need for foreign manpower and the actual distribution of labour recruits in Germany.<sup>1</sup>

For this reason, systematic and continuous efforts were made to prevent private firms and private individuals from hiring foreign help of any kind without official permission, and from employing agents or intermediaries abroad to induce workers to volunteer for them.<sup>2</sup> As a matter of principle, "foreign workers are allotted [to German employers] by the Reich Ministry of Labour upon application made by the employers and according to a plan evolved from the requirements of high policy".<sup>3</sup>

#### DISTRIBUTION OF FOREIGNERS IN INDUSTRY

When the Labour Office received an application for foreign workers, it had to examine: (1) whether the nature of the applicant's business justified the classification of his demand as "urgent"; (2) whether the wages and working conditions offered by the applicant complied with the regulations and whether the applicant's record showed that these regulations were obeyed in his undertaking; and (3) whether the necessary arrangements had been made for the accommodation and feeding of the workers. If the Labour Office had no objections to make on these points the application was forwarded to the Reich Ministry of Labour for final decision. The Labour Office might forward the application directly to a German recruitment office abroad, without first submitting it to the Reich Ministry of Labour, only when the application was for a small number of workers (up to five) who did not belong to the so-called scarce occupations (*Mangelberufe*).<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Dr. SYRUP, in *Soziale Praxis*, 1 Aug. 1941, p. 608.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. TIMM, in *Arbeitsrecht*, 3 May 1941.

<sup>3</sup> BIRKENHOLZ, in *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 83.

<sup>4</sup> MÜNZ, in *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 8.

Employers might not ask for workers of specified nationalities. Foreigners were distributed by the labour offices "according to the available supply of manpower, having regard to political and military security".<sup>1</sup> In the earlier part of the war the view was held in some quarters that for reasons of political and military security only workers of a single foreign nationality should work in any one undertaking, or that, at least, different nationalities working in the same plant should be kept strictly apart.<sup>2</sup> Other high officials of the German Labour Administration maintained, however, that the combination of many nationalities speaking different languages would ensure the maximum political security.

The employer had to possess a written "employment permit" (*Beschäftigungsgenehmigung*) for every individual foreign worker allotted to him. These permits were issued upon request by the labour offices. In addition, the employer (not the worker) had to apply, not to the labour office, but to the local police authorities for a "labour permit" (*Arbeitserlaubnis*) for every foreign worker. This permit could be issued only if the employer was already in possession of his own employment permit for the foreigner concerned. Both permits might be issued, if the employment was to be permanent, for a period of two years.<sup>3</sup> At first a fee of 3.50 RM for every employment permit and a fee of 5.00 RM for every labour permit had to be paid to the Reich. These fees were later abolished.

It was on the whole a difficult task to ascertain the number and the qualifications of foreign workers needed by various undertakings. Complaints from industry and from the various Government agencies were frequent.

Employers were frequently warned not to try other methods but always to use the official channel through the labour offices.<sup>4</sup> They were particularly forbidden to advertise, either in Germany or abroad, for foreign workers; the insertion of an advertisement in a paper was permitted only in special cases, and with the previous consent of the Labour Office or regional labour office.<sup>5</sup> As early as the first part of 1942 it was officially stated that "in

<sup>1</sup> Dr. TIMM, in *Arbeitsrecht*, 3 May 1941.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Decree by Reich Minister of Labour, of 13 April 1942. In exceptional cases (especially if the foreigner had not recently been recruited but had been living in the Reich for more than 10 years) he might apply to the police for a licence (*Befreiungsschein*) valid for two years at the most. Such licences enabled the bearer to accept work freely anywhere in the territory of the Reich, and neither he nor his employer was required to apply for additional permits as far as his individual work was concerned.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Dr. HANS HASTLER, Director of the Labour Bureau in Tetschen: "Die Feststellung des Kräftebedarfs", in *Arbeitseinsatz und Arbeitslosenhilfe*, No. 23-24, Dec. 1942, pp. 175 *et seq.*

<sup>5</sup> BIRKENHOLZ, in *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 85.

view of the extremely tense situation on the labour market at the present time, only plants with the highest urgency rating . . . can expect to be supplied with foreign workers".<sup>1</sup>

On the ground that "the needs of the essential war industries have unconditional priority as far as the distribution of the available labour force is concerned", a Decree for the protection of the armament industry, signed by Adolf Hitler, made it a criminal offence for "anybody knowingly to make false declarations about required or available labour". Such a criminal offence was made punishable by fines of unlimited amounts and hard labour (*Zuchthaus*) or, in particularly grave cases, by death. The same Decree conferred upon the secret tribunal called "People's Court", and upon the Reich Court-Martial, jurisdiction to try these cases of "manpower sabotage".<sup>2</sup>

Subsequent events, however, proved that this was the wrong approach. With the manpower shortage steadily growing more critical, while the need for war production was ever more pressing, a scramble for foreign workers was bound to continue. The influence of the particular semi-governmental organisation of employers concerned largely decided which undertaking in any one branch of industry, and which branch of industry, was successful for a longer or shorter time in the competition for manpower.<sup>3</sup>

Early in 1943, the most drastic curtailments up to that date were ordered, bringing to a standstill practically all activities not essential to war production. This step had a profound influence, not only on economic structure and habits of life in Germany, but even on the social structure itself, for it did away with large portions of the liberal professions, the retail trade, small businesses, small and medium handicrafts, the small and middle restaurant and catering industry, etc. The German manpower thus set free was diverted partly into the armed forces and partly into armament industry and agriculture. But even this step did not solve the problem; complaints of the efficiency rate in war industry continued to be heard.

Instead of relying on punishment and death sentences, such as were threatened in Adolf Hitler's Decree of March 1942, Professor Speer, Reich Minister of Armament and Munitions and head of the Todt Organisation, created in October 1943 a new corps of experts on personnel and efficiency problems. As its head he appointed Engineer Gotthard Friedrich, with the official title of

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 83.

<sup>2</sup> Decree of 21 March 1942; *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 9 Apr. 1942, No. 34, Part I, p. 165.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. p. 20.

Reich Manpower Engineer (*Reichsarbeitseinsatz-Ingenieur*). Friedrich divided the territory of Germany into 34 regions, each headed by a regional expert on personnel and efficiency questions.<sup>1</sup> Under Friedrich and his 34 regional subleaders, 5,000 experts on personnel and efficiency problems (*Betriebsarbeitseinsatz-Ingenieure*) were appointed to individual plants. According to the plan, there was to be one expert in every undertaking employing 300 or more workers.

The task of this new organisation was twofold: (a) to make a thorough investigation on the spot of the personnel and technological problems of the plant, with the object of finding out reasons for low efficiency or possibilities of higher efficiency; (b) on the basis of these investigations, to propose changes in personnel policy, as well as technical and organisational changes on the spot. In short, the efficiency experts had the task of "streamlining" production. Their approach was mainly psychological. Indeed, although these officials bore the title "engineer", they were not necessarily graduates of a technical school, nor was their task principally technological. With the assistance of industrial psychologists, plant physicians and motion-and-time-study specialists, the efficiency experts used the findings of psychological tests to determine whether individual workers were suited to their tasks or might not be otherwise employed where they could be of better use.

The tests were of three types:

(a) psycho-technical tests: mainly concerned with intelligence and mechanical comprehension, with manual ability and, as important auxiliary functions, with willpower, attention and memory;

(b) examination of character: consisting, in line with German military psychology, of expression analysis, analysis of life history, thought analysis (*Geistesforschung*) and willpower and action analysis;

(c) aptitude tests: in relation to vocational demands (psychological job analysis). On the basis of job analysis tables<sup>2</sup> the psychological requirements of various jobs in a given industry were rated by indicating on a seven-point standard scale 28 standardised principal psychological factors, such as motivation, intelligence, willpower and character, special intelligence patterns, motor abilities, etc., required for performing specific types of work. "If a

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<sup>1</sup> *Hamburger Fremdenblatt*, 20 Oct. 1943; *Svenska Dagbladet*, 23 Oct. 1943.

<sup>2</sup> These job analysis tables had been prepared, since 1938, by the Reich Institute for Vocational Training in Commerce and Industry (*Reichsinstitut für Berufsausbildung in Handel und Gewerbe*). Analysis of all the main branches of industry had not been completed by the beginning of 1944.

particular job has to be filled, only those traits for which the requirements are high need be tested".<sup>1</sup>

On the basis of these technological findings the efficiency experts were empowered to order workers to change their jobs within the undertaking. In so doing, they were asked to collaborate with the representatives of the Defence Commissioners and of the German Labour Front appointed to the particular plant. However, their powers were "not limited to orders given by the employers; they can themselves carry out extensive changes in the placing and organisation of workers within the undertaking".<sup>2</sup>

It is to be noted that this corps of experts worked independently of Fritz Sauckel's administration. The Commissioner-General for Manpower had his office at the Reich Ministry of Labour, but the head of the new organisation of industrial psychologists had his headquarters at the Reich Ministry of Armament and Munitions. While Fritz Sauckel was responsible to Reich Marshal Göring (after the summer of 1944, to Reich Minister Goebbels), Gotthard Friedrich was immediately responsible to Reich Minister Speer, to whom he had "direct access". His task differed from that of Fritz Sauckel: "Friedrich is responsible for rationalisation in the employment of workers in the plants, whereas Sauckel is responsible for providing the plants with workers".<sup>3</sup>

Some improvements in the treatment of foreign workers which were introduced in the later stages of the war were undoubtedly the result of the scientific tests used or organised by Friedrich's experts. According to German reports, the changes and innovations introduced on the basis of the proposals made by the personnel and efficiency experts were to result in an increase of productivity up to 10 per cent. But calculation of foreign manpower requirements of individual plants continued throughout the war to be a difficult task for the labour offices.

#### DISTRIBUTION OF FOREIGNERS IN AGRICULTURE AND OTHER OCCUPATIONS

In agriculture and other occupations methods of distribution were different and far cruder than those used for distributing and

<sup>1</sup> This paragraph is based on H. L. ANSBACHER: "German Industrial Psychology in the Fifth Year of War", in *Psychological Bulletin*, Vol. 41, No. 9, Nov. 1944, pp. 606-607, which summarises the German literature on the subject, including E. BORNEMANN: "Aufgaben der Arbeitspsychologie der Gegenwart, Teil I: Entwicklung des Eignungsuntersuchungswesens und ihre gegenwärtigen Fragestellungen", in *Stahl und Eisen* (the organ of the German steel and iron industry), 1944, pp. 37-47.

<sup>2</sup> *Hamburger Fremdenblatt*, 20 Oct. 1943.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> See p. 133.

economising foreign manpower in industry. Throughout the war, the "underground" press in many parts of Europe and newspapers in neutral countries reported that the German authorities allowed German farmers, housewives, etc., to select foreign workers under conditions reminiscent of "slave markets". The German press itself occasionally published reports alluding to the humiliating circumstances in which foreign labour recruits were hired at the labour offices. In the summer of 1942, for instance, a Munich paper described the procedure at a Bavarian labour office as follows<sup>1</sup>:

Now a village farmers' leader<sup>2</sup> steps before a fence. Behind it, Eastern workers, recently arrived at this Upper Bavarian labour office, are lined up: on the right hand, along the wall, in double file, the girls and women; on the left hand, already subdivided into gangs, the men and young boys. An experienced official begins to select them, accompanied by critical glances, with some comment, from the village farmers' leader.<sup>3</sup>

In the spring of 1944, in the course of the campaign to increase the output of foreign workers by less humiliating treatment, endeavours were made to change these methods. An article by Ministerial Councillor Dr. Bräutigam, distributed by the German Continental (News) Service and widely reproduced in the German press, went so far as to admonish Germans that "ragged clothing should not induce anybody to consider Eastern workers as morally debased persons".<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten*, 5 Aug. 1942.

<sup>2</sup> "Village farmers' leader" was the title of the heads of village branches of the National Socialist Farmers' Organisation.

<sup>3</sup> For the employment conditions of foreign domestic workers, see Chapter XI.

<sup>4</sup> Article released on 6 April 1944 by *Deutscher Heimdienst*, a subsidiary of the *Deutsches Nachrichten Bureau* (quoted by Peter CONRAD in *Die Zeitung* (London), 21 Apr. 1944).

## CHAPTER VII

### THE TODT ORGANISATION

The Todt Organisation, a vast undertaking for the construction of highways and fortifications, became one of the most important institutions of the National Socialist war machine. It owed its name to Dr. Fritz Todt, Major-General of the Air Force and holder of one of the highest ranks in the S.A. (*Standartenführer* on the Staff of the Supreme S.A. Leader)<sup>1</sup>, who began his spectacular career immediately after the Party came into power in Germany. From June 1933, as Inspector-General of the German Highway System he was responsible for the construction of the network of strategic highways that preceded the outbreak of war.<sup>2</sup>

Fifteen months before military hostilities began, on 28 May 1938, the Todt Organisation was founded, with Fritz Todt at its head, mainly with the object of hastening the completion of the West Wall. Soon afterwards, by Decree of 9 December 1938, Todt was appointed Commissioner-General for the Construction Industry. Early in 1940, he was also made Inspector-General for Special Tasks under the Four-Year Plan, Inspector-General for Water and Electric Power and—just before the beginning of the German offensive in the West—Reich Minister of Armament and Munitions.

When Fritz Todt was killed in an air accident he was succeeded in all his posts by Professor Albert Speer, Inspector-General of Urban Development of the City of Berlin (15 February 1942). In homage to Todt, the Organisation continued to be known as the Todt Organisation ("O.T."). Only one branch, which was most directly connected with the armed forces, was called the "Speer Construction Staff".

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<sup>1</sup> Another post in the Party hierarchy held by Dr. Todt was "Head of the Central Office for Technology of the National Socialist German Workers' Party".

<sup>2</sup> Under the Act of 17 June 1933, the Highway Construction Administration planned the construction of 4,500 to 4,800 miles of roads. It is estimated that less than two thirds of the programme was actually carried out; cf. Alfred VAGTS: *Hitler's Second Army (Infantry Journal, Washington, D.C. (Penguin Special), 1943, pp. 118-119)*. By 1938 the construction of the West Wall and of other fortifications, which strained German building and affiliated industries to the utmost, was considered more urgent than the continuation of the highway construction programme.



From the first German victories in the East, the Organisation went on extending its widespread activities to every newly won territory. It was the Organisation, for example, which erected the intricate system of defensive fortifications stretching from the northern part of Norway to the Spanish frontier (the so-called "Atlantic Wall").

In the words of the Reich Labour Trustee for the Todt Organisation:

... next to the *Reichsbahn* [the State-owned railways] ... the "O.T." is today undoubtedly the biggest employer in the world. Many hundreds of thousands of foreign workers are working side by side with a nucleus of German "O.T." workers at thousands of building sites.

... On the Atlantic Wall alone, workers from more than a dozen different countries are employed: Belgians and Netherlands, Frenchmen and Flemings, Italians and Croats, Czechs and Poles, Spaniards and Danes, Moroccans and other African tribes, even Indians, Annamites and Indo-Chinese (taken prisoner with the French Army) as well as workers from the East...<sup>1</sup>

The *Nachrichtendienst der Deutschen Zeitungsverleger*, official news agency of the German newspaper publishers, made the following comment on this statement:

Wherever there are German soldiers, there too the earth-brown uniform of the "O.T." worker is to be found. On every front, he has proved himself the indispensable helper of the troops.

... The "O.T." builds everything: pill-boxes and coastal fortifications, roads, snow tunnels, railways and bridges, harbours and quay installations, armament works and power stations; it even develops and works mines, bores for oil and mines other raw materials.

The list was not complete. This giant organisation also performed the following war tasks in all parts of the continent of Europe: repair of bomb damage; removal of German industries, or industries working for Germany, out of reach of Allied bombers; and, when necessary, construction of trenches, military camps, hangars, airfields and the like, and repair of damage at and immediately behind the German front lines. The Todt Organisation also constructed, with the greatest secrecy, the installations for the launching of the "robot" bombs and other weapons used by Germany after the opening of the western front in June 1944.

The longer the war lasted, the greater became the tasks and the importance of the Organisation. On 2 September 1943 Adolf Hitler issued a Decree<sup>2</sup> which redefined them:

(1) The "O.T." is an institution for the performance of construction tasks of all kinds essential to the outcome of the war. The head of the "O.T." is the

<sup>1</sup> *Neue Deutsche Zeitung*, 7 May 1943.

<sup>2</sup> *Reichsgesetzblatt*, Part 1, p. 530.

Reich Minister of Armament and Munitions. He is directly subordinate to me and is responsible exclusively to me.

(2) The "O.T." can be employed in the Greater German Reich as well as in the territories annexed to and occupied by it. The "O.T." is to go into action at the command of the head of the "O.T."

(3) Paragraphs (1) and (2) also apply to the transportation services working under the "O.T."

On the same day Adolf Hitler greatly increased Professor Speer's jurisdiction by putting the entire German armament industry under him.<sup>1</sup> (This limited the powers of the Reich Minister for Economic Affairs, but not those of the Commissioner-General for Manpower.)

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The methods used for the recruitment of foreign workers who were destined for employment in the Organisation did not greatly differ from the methods used for the recruitment of foreigners for deportation to Germany. The main difference was that, since the principal activities of the Organisation lay outside the frontiers of Germany, foreigners were not transported to Germany, but had either to work in their own country or in some other occupied territory.

In the recruitment drives for foreign workers for the Organisation, methods of compulsion as well as methods of persuasion were used, the latter usually with very little result. For example, in the summer and autumn of 1942, in the Flemish-speaking parts of Belgium, an intensive recruitment campaign was undertaken for the Organisation, which "was ready to receive Flemish workers with open arms".<sup>2</sup> A special Flemish section of the Organisation was formed, which was employed in some of the German-occupied parts of the Soviet Union. Immediately behind the fighting front the men had to build roads, railways, airfields and depots for the *Luftwaffe*. These contingents, as *Obergeneral-Arbeitsführer* Dr. Decker, a high official of the Organisation, pointed out<sup>3</sup>, were "liable to be attacked by bombers and dive bombers", and even had to fight "as infantrymen with the regular army during the heavy defensive fighting in the Rzev area". On 26 October 1942, a ceremony was held in Brussels in honour of the three thousandth Flemish worker leaving Belgium to join this contingent of the

<sup>1</sup> *Reichsgesetzblatt*, Part I, p. 529. Under the same Decree Professor Speer's title was changed from "Reich Minister of Armament and Munitions" to "Reich Minister for Armament and War Production", "in view of his increased responsibilities".

<sup>2</sup> *Volk en Staat*, 15 Oct. 1942.

<sup>3</sup> *Der Arbeitsmann*, quoted by *Neue Deutsche Zeitung*, 4 Sept. 1942.

Organisation in Russia. He was given a copy of Hitler's *Mein Kampf* and of K.A. Albrecht's *Der Verratene Sozialismus* ("Socialism Betrayed").<sup>1</sup>

On 20 November 1942, the well-known economic journal *Der Deutsche Volkswirt* stated that foreigners were increasingly needed "for the *Wehrmacht*, the German railways and the Todt Organisation". Official German sources estimated at that period that more than four fifths of the workers serving with the Organisation were foreigners.<sup>2</sup>

Although the number of civilian foreign workers recruited for work inside Germany was discussed at rare intervals, neither official German sources nor the German press gave any indication of the number of foreigners employed in the Organisation. Estimates of the number of workers (Germans and non-Germans) employed by the Organisation varied, before the summer of 1943, between 450,000 and 2,000,000.<sup>3</sup> It seems likely that as early as the summer of 1943—that is, before the German occupation of Italy—its strength was nearer to the second than to the first figure. After the German occupation of the non-liberated parts of Italy, the number of non-Germans pressed into work for the Organisation increased very considerably. In September 1943, among other large-scale fortification projects, Germany began the construction of a coastal defence system stretching from Toulon to Spezia (the "Ligurian Wall"). On 8 September 1943, Organisation headquarters were established at Sirmione on Lake Garda. Todt Organisation camps were at once erected in San Remo, Savona, Genoa, Florence and Cesena, to carry out preliminary work and to procure material. At first most of the workers were from Poland and the Balkans; but voluntary and compulsory Italian labour was very soon employed, and they formed the huge majority, with a small minority of Germans acting as foremen and the like.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Volk en Staat*, 30-31 Oct. 1942. After this recruitment campaign was over, the same German-dominated Flemish newspaper complained that "foreigners employed for Germany work badly" and "by their entire attitude show that Germany's fate is immaterial to them" (29 Dec. 1942).

<sup>2</sup> The number of foreigners "exceeded many times the number of Germans" (JUNGFLEISCH, in *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 79).

It must be remembered that, as explained already (see p. 54), these figures do not refer to German citizens and non-German citizens; in accordance with official National Socialist doctrine, many non-German citizens, not only from Austria and Czechoslovakia but also, for example, "racial Germans" and those citizens of Poland who were enrolled in the "list of Germans", were regarded as Germans for purposes of National Socialist statistics. If the usual criterion of citizenship is applied, the percentage of non-Germans among the persons serving with the Organisation was, therefore, even higher than the "more than 80 per cent." given by German sources, and the percentage of Germans lower than "less than 20 per cent."

<sup>3</sup> Alfred VAGTS, *op. cit.*, p. 131.

<sup>4</sup> *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 24 May 1944.

Early in October 1943, the Organisation stated in a proclamation to Italian workers and employers<sup>1</sup>, that the "Todt Organisation, which has been entrusted with vast construction works in all parts of Europe, is now beginning operations in Italy", and called for a large number of "labourers, bricklayers, miners, mechanics for building machines, motor drivers, smiths, cooks, [other] skilled workers and office staff. Italian workmen report at the offices of the Todt Organisation which have been opened in all large [Italian] cities, or at the labour offices". The proclamation promised employment "exclusively on Italian territory" and, invited the collaboration of Italian undertakings with the statement that the Organisation wished "as far as possible, to employ Italian firms".

Italians were encouraged to volunteer by the issue to them, after two months' service, of Todt Organisation uniforms and arm-bands bearing the swastika. The large majority of Italians recruited for work in the Organisation were not suited for it, for the recruiting centres in Milan, Verona, Padua, Bologna and elsewhere were chiefly concerned to fill the quotas required of them. The Organisation's camps were guarded mainly by armed German guards, but also secretly supervised by members of the Fascist secret police, the *O.V.R.A.*<sup>2</sup> In the late spring of 1944, it was reported that a special Italian armed guard (*Guardia Armata*), with monthly salaries of 1,000 lire, had been formed to control Italians working on Todt Organisation construction jobs.<sup>3</sup>

According to the Stockholm newspaper *Aftonbladet* of 4 April 1944, at that time Germany also began to use foreign women for Todt Organisation work. As an Allied invasion "somewhere in Europe" drew near and German defence preparations on all German-held European coast lines, but particularly in the north-west, were speeded up, recruitment drives for foreign workers for the Organisation increased in intensity. "Many young women in the Todt Organisation's ordinary brown uniform have recently been seen in the streets of Oslo. Some are French, some Dutch, some probably from the East."

These recruitment drives continued, where possible, after the Allied invasion of western Europe, and after the Soviet armies had broken through the outlying fortifications built by the Organisation. In July 1944, for example, former officers, non-commissioned officers and men of the Czechoslovak army were deported from Czechoslovakia and directed to work for the Todt Organisa-

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<sup>1</sup> *Corriere della Sera* (Milan), 9 Oct. 1943.

<sup>2</sup> *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 24 May 1944.

<sup>3</sup> *Die Zeitung* (London), 2 June 1944.

tion, or were even conscripted into Germany's foreign legions.<sup>1</sup> According to a Swedish report<sup>2</sup>, in September 1944, the Organisation employed all available manpower for the fortification of the southern side of Lyngenfjord, in Norway.

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There were fundamental differences within the Organisation between the Germans and the foreigners. As the proportion of foreigners increased, the remaining Germans were more and more exclusively employed as foremen.

The difference and the distance between the German and the foreign worker were constantly emphasised. German members of the Organisation wore a special uniform, consisting of a grey outfit like ski clothing, and on the left sleeve a swastika and an armband inscribed "O.T." or "Org. Todt". If employed outside the frontiers of Germany proper, they were known as "front-line workers of the Organisation" (*Frontarbeiter der O.T.*). Foreigners of "German race" who joined the Organisation, like those who joined the *Wehrmacht*, the *Waffen-S.S.* or the National Socialist Party, acquired German citizenship from 19 May 1943, or, if they joined at a later date, from the day on which they joined.<sup>3</sup>

The German authorities considered the work of the Organisation as "direct front activity" when it was carried out in an area not more than 20 miles behind the most advanced front line. German Todt Organisation workers employed in such areas were therefore, when on holiday, officially considered to be "on leave from the front". They received a "war leave certificate" and if it certified that the bearer had been "used in front activities at the Eastern Front", they were entitled, while on leave, to additional food rations.<sup>4</sup>

The special character of the German Todt Organisation worker from the legal, political, economic and military point of view was officially acknowledged in the description of him as a

... comrade equal in rights to the German soldier, who risks life and health for the Führer, the nation and the fatherland.

He represents a special type of German worker. On the one hand, he is a worker who, just like any other, receives the wage due to him according to collective regulations, and is subject to the general provisions concerning taxes and

<sup>1</sup> Reuter despatch, London, 31 July 1944; *Christian Science Monitor*, 31 Sept. 1944.

<sup>2</sup> *Sydsvenska Dagbladet*, 15 Sept. 1944.

<sup>3</sup> Decree of the Führer, countersigned by the Chief of the Reich Chancellery of the National Socialist Party, and the Chief of the Supreme Command of the *Wehrmacht*; *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1943, Part I, p. 315.

<sup>4</sup> Decree of the Reich Minister for Food and Agriculture of 22 October 1942.

social insurance; on the other hand, he is a soldier who, weapon in hand, defends his life at the front and who therefore is fed, lodged and clothed like a soldier, receives his military pay, and if he suffers bodily injury due to his employment, has the same legal rights to care as the members of the armed forces.<sup>1</sup>

The dangerous character of fortification and construction jobs and the hazards to which the workers were exposed, were clearly revealed by the special provisions contained in the Wage Order for German frontline workers outside the borders of the German Reich. These regulations granted to the German frontline worker of the Todt Organisation<sup>2</sup>:

(1) Continued payment of wages up to 13 weeks, if the worker's inability to work is due to wounds, to accident or to sickness;

(2) The right to free medical care, including orthopaedic and other treatment; whenever the medical branch of the Todt Organisation is not able to provide the necessary services they must be provided by the medical officers and dentists of the *Wehrmacht*;

(3) Pensions for disabled workers and, in case of death, for their surviving dependants; these pensions are to be the same as those for members of the armed forces and their surviving dependants (widow and other members of the family entitled to support by the deceased), provided that the workers were employed for purposes of the armed forces and that their work served the direct interest of the fighting troops. Construction work done by the Todt Organisation is considered as fulfilling the requirement of serving "the direct interest of the fighting troops". Similar payments are due to the families of German Todt Organisation frontline workers who are missing or have been taken prisoner. These provisions are also to apply to employers and automobile [truck] owners collaborating with the Todt Organisation;

(4) Members of the families of German frontline workers are entitled to travelling subsidies to enable them to visit wounded frontline workers in field hospitals.

Foreign workers and their families were not entitled to these special payments and benefits.

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It may be of interest to give, as an example of the wages and working conditions of foreign Todt workers, a description of a general regulation which had the force of collective rules for foreign construction workers of the Todt Organisation.

The regulation is dated 18 January 1943. It came into force on 1 February 1943 and was issued by Reich Trustee Dr. Schmelter, "Special Labour Trustee for the German Construction Industry

<sup>1</sup> Alex. JUNGLEISCH (*Oberregierungsrat* in the Todt Organisation, Berlin): "Arbeitsbedingungen und soziale Betreuung der O.T. Frontarbeiter", in *Soziale Praxis*, Feb. 1943, p. 79.

<sup>2</sup> Circular Decree by the Reich Minister of the Interior, of 21 August 1941.

Abroad, and Special Trustee for the Todt Organisation". It applied to foreign construction workers, including non-Germans from the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, employed on construction work and cognate activities in France, Belgium and the Netherlands, but did not apply to Frenchmen, Nederlanders and Belgians, persons of German *Volkstum*, to Poles and persons from the other eastern territories.

Regular working hours were fixed at 48. Overtime (to be paid at 25 per cent. increase) was unlimited and compulsory. No wage increase was granted for night work. The regular hours of work for machinists, stokers, chauffeurs, truck helpers and drivers of horse-driven wagons, was higher, namely, 60 in the week, and 72 in the week for watchmen, barrack guards, sickroom orderlies and cooks.

The hourly wages for a few categories of extra-skilled workers, such as master well-diggers, specialised foremen, and machinists working on bulldozers, were 85 to 96 Rpf. All other skilled workers, such as masons, smiths and foremen, received 80 Rpf. The wages for semi-skilled workers, such as iron moulders, construction machinists, stone masons and foremen of helpers' gangs, were 72 Rpf., and for helpers and unskilled workers of all categories, 65 Rpf.

If the work was paid on an hourly, and not on a piece-rate basis, sustained performance of work, better than the average, entitled the foreigner to an efficiency bonus of 10 per cent., subject to the previous consent of the German authorities controlling the construction work. Whenever it was proposed to grant the efficiency bonus to more than a quarter of the workers employed at any one locality, the consent of Dr. Schmelter had to be obtained.

Payment had, as far as possible, to be calculated on a piece-rate basis. Foreign workers paid by the hour, whose output continued to be below normal capacity, were liable to receive lower wages than the rates mentioned. These lower wages were to be fixed by the persons in charge of the unit, after consultation with the employer or his representative.

Boys under 18 years of age and women above 18 years of age were entitled to 80 per cent. of the wages of corresponding male workers. Women under 18 received 80 per cent. of the women's wage, *i.e.*, 64 per cent. of the male worker's wage.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to wages, the foreign workers were to receive free lodging and free food. It was moreover necessary to grant some increments to those who at the time of their recruitment had been promised higher wages. Married foreigners who had been hired

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<sup>1</sup> The wages of other foreign workers are discussed in Chapter X.

before 1 February 1943 and whose labour contracts had provided for higher wages (so long as those higher wages were not contrary to the German regulations then in force) could therefore apply to receive a "family bonus" until the termination of their original contract. If the foreigner worked for the Todt Organisation, a special department of it, the *Hauptabteilung Arbeitseinsatz und Sozialpolitik der Organisation Todt-Zentrale*, had to send the family bonus in monthly instalments to the worker's family.

Lastly, every foreigner, whether married or not, was entitled to special bonuses (*Einsatzgeld*) for the duration of his employment at the construction work. The special bonus was paid beginning from the time the foreigner was "marched off". The amount of this special bonus (to be paid in at least three monthly instalments) differed according to the nationality of the worker. Persons working in tunnels or underground, as well as divers and compression workers, received hardship bonuses.

The regulation also promised to foreigners, for every year of employment, a home furlough of 18 days plus the necessary travelling days, with free transportation and pay (10 times the normal hourly wage plus efficiency bonus and an additional 2.10 RM food money per day).

On the same date, 18 January 1943, the Reich Trustee, Dr. Schmelter, issued general regulations for foreign construction workers in Norway and Denmark, applicable to the same categories of foreigners as the scheme for France, Belgium and the Netherlands, but excepting Danes and Norwegians instead of Frenchmen, Belgians and Nederlanders. The conditions were practically identical.

It is safe to assume that these comparatively favourable wage scales (from which taxes, social insurance contributions, German Labour Front contributions and home remittances were, of course, deducted) were intended to diminish opposition from foreigners forced to work on German fortifications in the strategic areas in the west and north-west of Europe. But it should be noted that these wage scales were applicable neither to native workers in these regions (Frenchmen in France, Norwegians in Norway)<sup>1</sup> nor to Poles and other "Eastern" workers. Nor did these provisions, though comparatively favourable, include a maximum working day or week,

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<sup>1</sup> In June 1942, about 100,000 Norwegians were employed by the Todt Organisation on the construction of coastal fortifications, aircraft bases and naval bases in Norway, according to the *Stockholms-Tidningen* of 13 June 1942. At about the same period, some 54,000 Belgians and Nederlanders were serving under the Todt Organisation, building fortifications along the Channel coast.



the enforcement of safety measures, minimum standards for food and shelter, nor restrictions concerning wage reductions and physical punishment for "breaches of labour discipline".

As early as 16 August 1941, the working conditions of men employed by the Todt Organisation at an undisclosed location in Europe were described as follows in a broadcast by *Deutschland-sender*:

Early in the morning the workers are fetched by large buses. They have to work twelve hours a day, interrupted only by twenty minutes' rest in the morning, twenty minutes in the afternoon and half an hour for lunch. Because of the urgency of the work now under construction, there has been uninterrupted work over many months without any break for Sunday or holidays. Leave can be granted only very sparingly. All these men lead a Spartan existence in their frugal living quarters, which are of a modest hutment type.

In fact, the Todt Organisation police and punishment camps were as well known and as much feared by foreign Todt Organisation workers as were the police and punishment systems used against foreign workers in Germany.

The varied character of the activities of the Todt Organisation and the severity of its recruitment and labour conditions are illustrated by an Order of the Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare of the puppet State of Serbia, issued early in 1943. At that time the Ministry was responsible for conscripting Serb workers for employment in the Bor Mines, which were run by the Organisation. An article in the German-dominated Serb newspaper *Novo Vreme* of 6 February 1943 observed that compulsory work was for six months and should not be regarded as punishment, but as the duty of all Serb citizens. The Ministry was calling up all fit men between 23 and 30 for employment on surface work at Bor and the surrounding area, in loading and unloading, the construction of railways and roads, and in forestry and building. Each man was required to bring warm clothing, a blanket, sound footwear and eating utensils. The *Todtbor* officials were responsible for housing them in huts equipped with electricity and hot baths. The working day lasted for ten hours, wages varied between 2,000 and 2,500 dinars a month, with lodging, heating and light free. The only reference to food states that the ration "includes 900 grams of bread of mixed wheat and maize flour, and costs 20 dinars a day . . . Strict discipline is maintained and work may not be left without permission. The prefect's orders must be promptly obeyed. The minimum punishment is three months' forced labour. Sentences of imprisonment may also be given."

Workers of other nationalities were also liable to severe punishment. For example, on 6 July 1943, the French paper *L'Ouest-*

*éclair*<sup>1</sup> published the following communiqué from the *Feldkommandant*, Major-General Seeböhm:

*During the last few months a large number of workmen have left the labour camps of the Todt Organisation without the necessary permission.* According to the French laws of 9 September 1942 and 16 February 1943, no-one may leave his work without first obtaining permission from the Labour Inspector or the Commissariat of the Compulsory Labour Service. Persons infringing these laws are punished by imprisonment and fines. In addition, unjustifiable breach of a labour contract will be punished, according to paragraph 20 of the Decree of 18 December 1942, issued by the Military Commander in France for the protection of the occupying armies, by hard labour, imprisonment or fine, and even, in serious cases, by the death sentence.

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<sup>1</sup> *L'Ouest-éclair* (North Zone), 6 July 1943.

## CHAPTER VIII

### LABOUR CONTRACTS

#### BILATERAL GOVERNMENT AGREEMENTS

In several European countries, Germany sought and found active support from Governments for the recruitment and transport of their nationals to Germany or German-occupied territory. In these cases bilateral agreements were signed, dealing with the recruitment of workers within the country, their treatment while in German employment, and their eventual return.

Like most bilateral treaties concluded between various countries before the war, these agreements usually contained a so-called model (collective or individual) labour contract which was to serve as a basis for labour relations between the foreign workers and German undertakings. It must be borne in mind that it was not the treaty between the Governments, but a collective or individual labour contract copying the model contained in the treaty, which formed the basis of these relations. The contract was often signed on behalf of the workers by an organisation to which they were compelled to belong, such as the Italian Fascist Labour Corporations.

#### *German-Spanish Government Agreement concerning Allocation of Spanish Manpower to Germany*

As an example, some of the chief provisions of the Treaty between Germany and Spain concerning the allocation of Spanish manpower to Germany of 2 August 1941 may be cited:

The Spanish Government agrees that, through German efforts, Spanish manpower shall be hired in Spain and shall be made available for employment in Germany (*Article 1*).

The task of recruiting, hiring and taking care of Spanish manpower lies, on the German side, in the hands of the delegates of the Reich Ministry of Labour and the German Labour Front, and on the Spanish side, in the hands of the Ministry of Labour and of the National Directorate of Trade Unions (*Delegación Nacional de Sindicatos*) (*Article 2*).

The Spanish authorities<sup>1</sup> shall be responsible for recruiting the workers and for making a preliminary selection from among them. Workers who have been

<sup>1</sup> Notwithstanding this provision, the Reich Ministry of Labour set up a Spanish branch office (*Dienststelle*) which, in collaboration with representatives of the German Labour Front, sent flying recruiting columns to various parts of Spain (*Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 1941, Part V, pp. 5-7).

selected shall be presented to a German-Spanish Commission for final examination and selection (*Article 4 (2)*).

The Spanish authorities shall arrange for the departure of the hired workers at the time and in the form agreed upon; they shall inform the Reich Ministry of Labour and the German Labour Front of the time of departure of the various transports. The competent German authorities shall take over the Spanish workers at the Spanish frontier. After the labour contract has expired or otherwise lawfully ended, the workers shall be handed over to the Spanish authorities at the Spanish frontier (*Article 6*).

The Spanish workers shall receive in Germany the same treatment as comparable German workers as regards conditions of work, social insurance, safety provisions and labour courts (*Article 8*).

Spanish workers who have been duly recruited shall be entitled while in Germany to send to Spain the savings they make in Germany (*Article 9*).

The German authorities shall ensure that the housing of the Spanish workers is suitable, so far as morality and health are concerned (*Article 10*).

The Spanish workers shall be debited only with the legally prescribed wage deductions and deductions for membership fee for the German Labour Front (*Article 11*).

In collaboration with the competent German authorities, a Spanish delegation in Germany shall exercise control over Spanish workers to ensure that they fulfil their obligations. For this purpose the delegation shall visit the working places and living places of the workers. This delegation shall participate in the execution of the present agreement and shall protect the interests of Spanish workers vis-à-vis the official German authorities (*Article 12*).

If the Spanish Government calls workers back to Spain in the interests of the defence of the country, the individual labour contract in question may be dissolved without notice (*Article 13*).

The agreement shall be valid until 31 December 1943, and shall be renewed by tacit understanding from year to year, unless notice is given at the latest by 1 October for the end of the calendar year (*Article 15*).

The "model working conditions" (contained in a supplement to the Treaty and published in an official communiqué)<sup>1</sup> added several important details. According to them, Spaniards as young as 16 years of age, as well as married men with grown-up children, were eligible for recruitment.

After proving his identity, the Spanish worker had to sign an application for work in Germany. By the act of signing, he assumed the following obligations: to submit himself to examination by a Spanish-German commission; to sign with a representative of a German undertaking an individual labour contract the conditions of which were to be communicated to him in their entirety (orally) in Spanish; to submit to labour discipline from the moment of being assigned to a departing group; to send to his family at least one half of the salary which remained to him after paying for his living expenses; and to provide himself with a complete outfit of clothing, including underwear and shoes, according to orders which

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<sup>1</sup> Reproduced in the Madrid newspaper, *ABC*, 5 Oct. 1941.

he would receive in due time (or if his conditions did not permit, to pay for an outfit which he would receive in Spain at the moment of his departure, by devoting 10 per cent. of his transfers for his family to the discharge of this debt).

A distinction was drawn between industrial workers and seasonal or non-seasonal agricultural workers. The industrial workers had to undertake to remain in Germany for two years<sup>1</sup>, one year to be spent in the same undertaking, and had to take cognisance of the fact that even after the two-year period the individual contract could be renewed for one year at a time.

The "model conditions" further contained a clause permitting the German employer to transfer the Spaniard (without his consent) to another German undertaking, provided the new job offered conditions as good as, or better than, those that he had originally accepted.

The worker was to participate in accident insurance, which also covered accidents caused by warfare, from the moment of his crossing the Spanish-French frontier. With regard to sickness insurance, particular emphasis was laid on the fact that he was promised participation in precautionary medical care (periodical examinations and prophylactic treatments).

After one year of work he was promised a minimum holiday of 21 days, to be spent in Spain, travelling time to the Spanish frontier not being included in the holiday period. Payment for the holiday was to be granted in accordance with German legislation.<sup>2</sup> Holiday travel had to be entirely at the worker's own expense.

Under the "model contract", Spanish industrial workers were promised wages between 60 and 90 Rpf. per hour and, under certain conditions<sup>3</sup>, a daily bonus of between 1 and 2 RM for being separated from their families.<sup>4</sup> The agreement also provided that the Spaniards were to be housed and fed in common lodgings or camps, provided with interpreters, and if possible, Spanish cooks.

<sup>1</sup> In a report on the German-Spanish Treaty, the *Reichsarbeitsblatt* asserted that the Spanish Government would ensure that Spanish workers hired for Germany (except seasonal agricultural workers) worked in Germany at least two years (*Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 15 Oct. 1941, Part V, p. 517).

<sup>2</sup> Such a holiday would extend at least over 23 days; since German labour legislation provided for holidays with pay for manual labourers under comparable circumstances only for one week (or two weeks at the most) the Spaniards were to receive payment only during a part of their holiday.

<sup>3</sup> The most important condition was that the worker must have been before his departure the head or provider of the family.

<sup>4</sup> On the assumption that lodging and board would cost between 10 and 14 RM a week, it was officially computed that they would be left, as a rule, with 20 RM per week and would be able to send home between 60 and 100 RM a month. These sums, automatically exchanged by Germany at the official rate of 4.35 pesetas for 1 RM, would "guarantee the absolute economic independence of their families". This calculation did not take into account the very considerable German taxes and obligatory contributions to be deducted from the nominal wages.

The Spanish delegation which supervised the workers while in Germany also had to ensure that they received religious ministrations.

The salient features of the treatment of Spanish workers in Germany, as outlined in the model labour contract, can be summarised as follows. They were not allowed to take their families with them. While in Germany, they were forbidden to take meals where they pleased or to choose their own living quarters. The obligation to live in mass quarters also prevented unmarried Spaniards from founding a home in Germany. Since he was obliged to pay the same taxes, social insurance contributions and fees (e.g., to the German Labour Front) as Germans, the Spanish worker had to contribute to various social service schemes the benefits of which he would not receive, because he had to return to Spain at the end of his employment. On the other hand, he was forbidden to return unless his obligations were considered to have been fulfilled.

### *Italian Workers' Contracts*

The "model contract" for the employment of Italian industrial workers in Germany was drawn up in German and in Italian. The parties to the contract were the German employer, and the Fascist Confederation of Italian Workers, which acted on behalf, and as representatives of, the Italian workers who were to be sent to Germany and whose names had to be contained in the contract. The contract had to specify place of destination, type of work, qualifications needed, and wage and bonus scales.<sup>1</sup>

### *Government Agreements concerning the Importation of Agricultural Workers*

During the war, agreements concerning the importation of agricultural workers were concluded between the German Government and the Governments or public authorities of Italy, Bulgaria, Croatia, Netherlands, Spain, Slovakia and Hungary.<sup>2</sup>

Most of these agreements contained provisions concerning the types of workers required, their transportation, normal period of employment, wages, bonuses, hours of work, accommodation and food. The full texts of these agreements were kept secret, but some of the "model labour contracts" attached to them were published.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix V.

<sup>2</sup> W. PETERSSEN, in *Ausländische Arbeiter*, pp. 606, 615 *et seq.*

<sup>3</sup> See Appendix V.

It should be noted, particularly in view of the claims that may be made after the war by, or on behalf of, former deportees, their dependants, or survivors, that, whenever possible, the German authorities made foreign workers sign individual contracts. These contracts were not always based on a "model contract", for the policy was also followed in cases where no bilateral agreement existed between Germany and the country of the worker concerned. The contracts were signed whether the foreigner worker's acceptance of employment was genuinely voluntary, or not. They usually contained a clause limiting the length of employment in or for Germany to a specified period.

### TERMINATION OF CONTRACTS

Theoretically, a foreign worker could return to his home country for any of the following reasons<sup>1</sup>:

- (1) Termination of the period for which the worker was engaged.

In normal circumstances, the obligation to work in Germany would have ended with the end of the period of employment.

- (2) Dismissal because of the end of the working season, on the understanding that the worker was required to return to work at the beginning of the next working season.

This clause referred to seasonal agricultural workers. In practice, only a few of them were considered as seasonal workers and released at the end of the season. Before the war, the greatest number of foreigners employed in Germany were migratory Polish workers, who went back home when the work was over. This arrangement was altered soon after the war began, as is shown by a Reich Wage Order (*Reichslohntarif*) of January 1940<sup>2</sup>, concerning the period of employment of Polish agricultural workers. This Order provided that in the absence of an agreement to the contrary in individual cases, Polish workers employed in Germany and paid by the month must serve until 31 January of the year following the year in which they were hired. Their employment was moreover automatically renewed for a year at a time, unless the contract had been terminated by 31 October. The employment could not be terminated, and the parties could not agree to dissolve their contractual relationship, without the express consent of the labour office. The worker was entitled to repayment of his travelling expenses from the pre-war German-Polish frontier to his place of work and, provided that his employment had duly and legally ended, to free

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<sup>1</sup> Decree by the Reich Minister of Labour, of 4 March 1941.

<sup>2</sup> *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 2, 15 Jan. 1940.

transport from that place to the nearest railway station and a free railway ticket back to the frontier.

(3) Termination of work.

This clause was hardly ever applied to any large number of foreign workers. It affected only a very few technicians who had been invited to come to Germany for special tasks.

(4) If the German labour administration no longer desired to employ the worker in Reich territory.

This clause referred to persons whom the German authorities wished to remove on the ground of physical unfitness or for political reasons.

(5) Permanent (*dauernde*) sickness, injury from accident, etc.

Sick or injured workers whose capacity for work could not be restored within a short period were removed.<sup>1</sup>

(6) Unfitness.

"Unfitness" covered not only physical incapacity, but also political unsuitability, as under clause (4).

(7) Summons to military duty.

This clause referred only to workers from neutral countries and countries allied to Germany and was thus of slight practical importance.

### COMPULSORY PROLONGATION OF LABOUR CONTRACTS

The labour "contracts" which conscripted foreigners had to sign usually contained a clause limiting the period of work in Germany to six months or one year. However, millions of foreigners were forced to continue to work in Germany after the expiration of the periods originally provided for.

Various methods were used to circumvent the clauses providing for the release of the labour recruits after a certain period. A Decree of the Controller-General of Labour of 22 February 1943<sup>2</sup> referred to the difficulties that had arisen because German employers "frequently" kept workers longer than the original contract had provided for, either by unilaterally prolonging the contracts or by maintaining that a foreign worker who was transferred from one factory to another was required to work at the new place for another term. In the case of Italian workers, German employers

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<sup>1</sup> See Chapter XIV.

<sup>2</sup> *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 15 Mar. 1943, Part I, p. 181.



even granted them home furloughs to Italy as an inducement to serve another term in Germany on returning from the furlough.<sup>1</sup>

But devices to force foreigners to overstay their original contracts were not confined to individual German firms; they had long since become part of the Government's labour policy.

The German Government constantly endeavoured to persuade collaborationist and puppet Governments to connive at prolongation of the employment of their nationals, by amending the bilateral treaties, or making new agreements.<sup>2</sup> The most important and best known sample of this technique was afforded by the periodical negotiations with the Vichy Government. The argument in favour of a "bilateral" agreement, as against simple unilateral action by Germany, was the need for the active administrative collaboration of the foreign authorities in the huge task of keeping restless foreign populations under control.

Indeed, this necessity gave the foreign authorities some opportunity to resist the repeated German demands; and when their misgivings could not be overcome by negotiations and pressure, Germany resorted to unilateral action. The German-dominated Paris Radio announced, for example, on 18 November 1943, that all French workers employed in Germany had had their "contracts" extended by the German authorities for the duration of the war.

As an "authoritative" spokesman, writing in the official magazine of Sauckel's organisation<sup>3</sup>, stated in January 1943, "the German labour offices were given authority to order workers from certain territories, *whose contracts had expired*, to be recruited for compulsory labour service, at first for a period of three months". Later, this power was extended even further, and the labour offices could recruit for compulsory labour service "*without indicating a specific date for its termination*".

The pressure exerted upon foreigners and their dread of recruitment for compulsory labour service are illustrated by the following words of the same writer: "Fortunately, the labour allocation agencies succeeded, through consultation with the workers, in persuading the great majority of the foreigners to renew their current labour contracts *voluntarily*; it was necessary only in relative-

<sup>1</sup> The Italian authorities protested against this practice and frequently forbade Italian workers to return to Germany if their contracts with the German firms had been made without the intervention of the official Italian representatives.

<sup>2</sup> For instance, in the case of Hungarian workers whose contract provided for their return to Hungary after six months' work, Germany entered into an agreement with the Hungarian Government extending the duration of the contract (*Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 85 (1), supplement, 20 July 1942). The date of this German-Hungarian agreement was not made public.

<sup>3</sup> Editorial "von massgeblicher Seite", in *Arbeitseinsatz und Arbeitslosenhilfe*,

ly few and exceptional cases to make use of the authorisation" (to send recalcitrant foreigners to compulsory labour camps).

In a circular Order of 20 February 1943, addressed to all Reich labour trustees<sup>1</sup>, the Commissioner-General for Manpower decreed that foreign workers who had been absent from their working place for reasons such as serving a prison term or confinement in a correctional (labour) camp were to be considered as having stayed away from their work by default, "just as if they had been absent because they went 'on a spree' or for some similar reason". Hence, the Order concluded, the duration of employment as stipulated in the labour contract must be extended by the duration of the prison or labour camp term.

The authorities did not often consider it necessary even to make this feeble pretence of legality. Since no foreign worker was allowed to leave his German place of residence, still less to leave German territory, without the written consent of the labour office and the police, the German authorities were in a position to force him to overstay his original working term, and made extensive use of their power.<sup>2</sup>

It should also be noted that no German wartime regulation provided for the foreigner's right to challenge any Order before the courts or the administrative authorities. This applied, not only to such questions as whether and when he was entitled to return home, but to all other disputes in which the millions of recruited foreigners might be involved.

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<sup>1</sup> *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 25 Mar. 1943, Part I, p. 196.

<sup>2</sup> By Order of 30 September 1942, for example, the Commissioner-General for Manpower decreed that foreign workers who would not voluntarily consent to extend the duration of their contracts should be recruited for three months of labour service. Before the three months had passed, he tightened the stipulation, with the explanation that "henceforward gaps caused by the departure of foreign workers to their respective countries after the expiration of their labour contracts cannot possibly be tolerated" (Order of 3 December 1942). Similarly, the Mannheim newspaper *Hakenkreuzbanner* wrote on 27 April 1944: "The labour contracts of Frenchmen employed in [German] inland shipping during 1943 were to last for one year and are, therefore, soon due to expire. But since their training has involved considerable effort and expense, the Commissioner-General for Manpower has decided that the Frenchmen concerned may be conscripted for labour beyond the duration of their contract if the labour situation requires it."

## CHAPTER IX

### LIVING CONDITIONS

"One of the principles of the German Administration of Foreign Labour is that the presence of the foreigners in Germany must be temporary. It must be our principle *that the foreign worker is to put his labour at the disposal of the country by which he is taken over, but only for a limited period of time.* The link between the worker and his own country must not be broken. Continental migration *must not induce workers to make their homes in the country which takes them over;* it must not facilitate an unnatural intermingling of European peoples and races. After all, a nation can call its own only the soil ploughed by itself and the coal mined by itself."<sup>1</sup>

This basic position, which reveals that uneasiness over the mass influx of aliens to which reference has already been made, coloured the official attitude from the beginning of the mass importations. It contributed a great deal to the plight of the imported workers. The facilities provided for the foreigners were of a transitory and makeshift nature; yet millions of persons had to live for years under these emergency conditions.

With the prolongation of the war, the problems grew more and more complex. On the one hand, the German authorities found that, in spite of severe control the substandard conditions under which the foreigners lived lowered their output. Moreover, as the labour supply grew scarcer and victories gained by the United Nations stiffened the foreigners' opposition, even to the point of attempting strikes<sup>2</sup>, some concessions had to be made, particularly with regard to food. On the other hand, in the later phases of the war, control and restrictions were increasingly tightened.

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. SYRUP, in *Soziale Praxis*, 1 Aug. 1941, p. 608 (italics in original).

<sup>2</sup> In October 1943, the French "underground" paper *Humanité* reported that 2,500 Frenchmen working in a locomotive factory in Floridsdorf, Vienna, as a result of strike action, secured improvements in food and holiday arrangements. On 1 February 1944, the southern edition of the French "underground" paper *Le Franc-tireur* praised "the splendid example given by Danish workers in the Berlin Siemens-Schuckert works who, by passive resistance, won a substantial improvement in their conditions". *Le Franc-tireur* also stated that oppositional German workers frequently co-operated with the foreigners.

## HOUSING

The regulations issued by the German authorities and the arrangements made between them and German employers laid the greatest stress on the necessity of lodging foreign workers in hutments whenever possible.<sup>1</sup> In fact, the countries of origin had to agree to this principle in their bilateral treaties with Germany. The reason for this policy was the desire to isolate foreign workers as much as possible from the German population and to facilitate their policing and control; moreover, unless they were housed together, it was less easy to feed them together.<sup>2</sup>

According to the *Völkischer Beobachter* of 20 October 1943, there were 22,000 camps for foreign workers at that date. The location of these camps and the distribution of the labour recruits among them were not made public.

As a matter of principle, responsibility for placing foreigners in existing buildings or for erecting new huts (*Gemeinschaftsbaracken*) lay with the undertakings which employed them. The housing of millions of workers created many new and unwelcome problems for management. Although every available structure was put to use, existing facilities by no means sufficed to shelter such enormous numbers. Wartime restrictions made the erection of new buildings, however primitive, more and more difficult, and in many cases impossible.

Employers complained that even when they were able to provide and equip mass accommodation<sup>3</sup> the expenses were high. The *Frankfurter Zeitung* of 7 November 1942 estimated that, if new buildings had been erected, costs per bed would have amounted to between 600 and 1,200 RM, although the initial outlay was, of course, smaller, if existing buildings, such as halls and empty wings of factories, could be converted. But, even after the initial expenses had been met, the *Frankfurter Zeitung* continued, the weekly payments of the inmates did not suffice to cover the actual costs of housing and feeding them. As

<sup>1</sup> At the Department for Labour Allocation of the German Labour Front, a special section (*D.A.F., Amt für Arbeitseinsatz, Sonderdienststelle Lagerbau*) was formed to handle all questions connected with the erection of the huts. On 3 June 1939, three months before the outbreak of military hostilities, the German-dominated Prague newspaper, *Der Neue Tag*, reported that Czech workers employed in Brunswick had to live in huts with Italians and Slovaks.

<sup>2</sup> The *Manual for Foreign Industrial Workers* of 4 May 1942, which was handed to foreigners from western countries for their information, made the following comment on the food and lodging conditions which they should expect in Germany: "As a rule, foreign workers are lodged in common lodging quarters which are provided by the employers. Meals are also taken in common. Restrictions due to wartime conditions must be accepted" (reprinted in *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 25 May 1942, No. 15, Part I, pp. 285 *et seq.*).

<sup>3</sup> Construction material had to be furnished by the plants employing the foreigners.

a remedy, employers were advised to find ways and means of reducing costs; for example, the available space should be more fully utilised by putting more beds into one building. In order to make the camps self-supporting, the Chamber of Industry and Commerce had been endeavouring ever since 1940 to induce several firms employing workers to use one joint camp, as was done, for example, in Frankfort and other cities in the Rhine and Main districts. The firms sharing these joint camps divided the costs proportionately between them.

In a similar vein, the *Deutsche Bergwerks-Zeitung*, in an editorial of 22 December 1942, criticised employers who

failed to make provisions to ensure that their foreign workers will be kept in camps. Some firms consider such camps merely as temporary accommodation until the worker can be lodged in private houses. It has been proved that foreigners, who are hard-working when they live under the strict discipline of the camps, frequently become idle and irregular in their working habits when privately billeted. In this, indeed, they often get the support of irresponsible landlords.

The organ of Rhenish-Westphalian heavy industry was obviously expressing the views of officials who were disturbed if, through lack of vigilance on the part of certain undertakings, foreigners moved into private homes and mingled with the German population. The article continued:

As the number of foreign workers living in private billets has increased considerably in recent months, the Party and State authorities have found it necessary to take counter-measures . . . In the future, no foreign worker who came into the Reich after 1 September 1939 may take lodgings in a private house unless the chief officer of the local German Labour Front agency has stated in writing that he has no objection. Furthermore, workers who live in private houses and do not work as hard as possible, or who otherwise offend against the written and unwritten laws of the State, can be ordered by the German Labour Front to leave these houses. In future, therefore, only foreign workers who distinguish themselves by special efforts will be permitted to live in private houses. Additional accommodation will thus be placed at the disposal of Germans and the manifold dangers arising from the employment in the Reich of millions of volunteers will be reduced.

The head of the Office of Labour Allocation of the German Labour Front, Franz Mende, writing in the summer of 1943, expressly stated that "the securing of sufficient [mass] accommodation is considered by the German authorities as a political issue. The recruiting agencies have therefore been instructed to give orders for the recruitment of foreign workers only if the German Labour Front attests that sufficient accommodation has been provided, as required by the regulations."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 25 July 1942, Part I, p. 332.

In order to facilitate mass housing, in spite of wartime shortages, and to decrease expenses, many detailed regulations were issued limiting the use of raw material and labour in the construction of quarters for foreigners. Considerations of durability were expressly excluded. General regulations concerning safety devices, minimum number of staircases, and the like, were not to apply.<sup>1</sup> Most of the dwellings were inadequately heated, and regulations issued by Dr. Sauckel as early as 15 July 1942 reveal that heating facilities were often entirely lacking.

Camps or hutments for "Eastern" workers were of even poorer quality than for others:

Camps for Eastern workers and for other foreign workers really should not be mentioned in the same breath, because these two categories receive entirely different treatment. The first, coming from the occupied regions of the East and having been taken to Germany to make themselves useful under German direction, naturally cannot be allowed to do as they please. They are put into camps where special "house regulations" are in force. They are taken to and from their place of work in groups. Cleanliness is the supreme requirement and, with Prussian exactness, great care is taken that this order is carried out. Civilisation is already beginning to make itself felt in these camps. The women are more easily converted to cleanliness than the men and are generally more adaptable and careful. Their leisure naturally has to be spent in the camp. However, they are not always left to their own devices. Provided that they have made good efforts and irreproachably observed all the rules, small groups of workers are occasionally taken out on Sundays.

The other foreign workers are foreigners who have volunteered for work in Germany, and are naturally treated quite differently. They live in camps for the sake of convenience, but are their own masters during their leisure time.<sup>2</sup>

In a circular of 21 November 1942<sup>3</sup> the Commissioner-General for Manpower repeated his former Order that "Eastern" workers should, as far as possible, not be allocated in such a way that members of the same family had to be separated. But, even in the case of friendly and allied nationalities, such as Hungarians, Croats and "Flemings", married couples usually lived separately, even if they were working in the same factory. They were allowed to take their meals and to spend their free time together.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A circular Order by the Reich Minister of Armament and Munitions, Department of Barracks, of 2 October 1942, directed that from the autumn of 1942 foreign workers in the forestry and timber industries were no longer to be accommodated in barracks, but in huts (*Waldhütten*). These huts were to be constructed from locally available material, without the use of construction timber. If "in certain cases" bricks were needed, application had to be made to the representative of Reich Minister Speer (*Reichsarbeitsblatt*, Nos. 1-2, 1943, Part I, p. 27). An article in a technical journal on fire prevention and fire fighting in barracks stated that "fire security in urban and in rural communities, in industrial plants and in forest regions has been endangered to an extent hitherto unknown by the steady multiplication of wooden camps" (*Feuerpolizei*, Nos. 7-8, 1942, p. 75).

<sup>2</sup> *Essener National-Zeitung* (organ of Reich Marshal Göring), 22 Jan. 1943.

<sup>3</sup> *Arbeitseinsatz und Arbeitslosenhilfe*, Dec. 1942, p. 187.

<sup>4</sup> *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 18 Dec. 1941.

Some "model quarters" existed, *e.g.*, in Berlin-Staacken, which were frequently shown to visitors. As a rule, however, the barracks were greatly overcrowded. "It may not have been easy for many Latvian men or women . . . when six or more, and sometimes up to thirty persons, had to live together harmoniously in one room."<sup>1</sup> In the barracks for western European workers employed in Berlin munition factories, long, narrow rooms, 33 yards by 10 feet, contained 16 bunks, one table, two benches, and 16 small padlocked cupboards.<sup>2</sup>

*Le Petit marseillais* wrote on 11 February 1944, in a German-inspired article:

At first, French workers in Germany had the greatest difficulties regarding food and shelter. Now good workers can sometimes rent private rooms near the factory or even inside the factory precincts. But these rooms are few and expensive. Generally, the workers live in camps. The buildings are new; the beds are well spaced in large dormitories containing 100 persons but the camp supervisors often group workers who are friends in rooms with fewer persons.

### FOOD

In the instructions issued shortly after taking office, Fritz Sauckel stated rather vaguely that the food rations for foreign workers were to be "proportionate" to those of comparable German workers. "As far as possible, these rations should consist of types of food to which the workers are accustomed."<sup>3</sup> Feeding, like housing, was, wherever possible, organised on a mass basis.<sup>4</sup> Under a Decree by the Reich Minister for Food and Agriculture of 22 March 1942, the standard weekly rations for civilian foreign workers (except "Eastern" workers) lodged and fed in hutments and camps, irrespective of age and sex, were<sup>5</sup>:

<sup>1</sup> *Deutsche Zeitung im Osten*, 7 July 1942.

<sup>2</sup> In the summer of 1943, the Party paper *Angriff* (16 July 1943), reported that in camps for foreigners, especially "Eastern" workers, "cupboards for keeping their wages are not available, and their wages are therefore in danger of being stolen".

<sup>3</sup> Quoted by MENDE, *loc. cit.*, p. 230. Under Fritz Sauckel's order, the rations were to be determined by the Reich Minister of Food and Agriculture.

<sup>4</sup> Early in 1944, a Swedish source estimated that there were about 21,000 camp kitchens for foreigners in Germany (*Vestmanslands Laens Tidning Vaesteras*, 28 Apr. 1944). On one of the very rare occasions when the German-dominated foreign-language labour papers printed complaints by deported workers, *Broen*, a paper for Danish workers in Greater Germany, published, on 4 April 1943, an angry reply to laudatory statements made in the same paper three weeks earlier, about a "Visit to the Danish Workers' Camp in Vienna": "As far as food is concerned, we must contradict. It is not cheaper and better in the camp than outside; on the contrary, it is more expensive and not so good. Six days out of seven the food is uneatable . . . When the food is good it is because an inspection is taking place . . . These are our corrections to your inaccurate, improbable and fantastic article. Signed: Kjeld Bruhn PETERSEN, on behalf of the Danish workers at the Café Donau, Vienna."

<sup>5</sup> *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 222 (1), supplement, 1 Oct. 1942.

Meat.....	450 grams <sup>1</sup>
Fats.....	225 grams
Bread.....	2,800 grams

These basic rations were in force from 6 April until 19 October 1942, when they were slightly increased<sup>2</sup>:

Meat.....	500 grams
Fats.....	225 grams
Bread.....	3,000 grams

In addition, the factory or camp canteen was authorised to draw for every foreign worker a weekly supply of:

Flour.....	30 grams
Nährmittel <sup>3</sup> or potato starch products.....	60 grams
Ingredients for the preparation of soups <sup>4</sup> ...	320 grams

Foreigners performing "heavy" and "exceptionally heavy" tasks (*Schwerarbeiter*, *Schwerstarbeiter*) were entitled to certain additional rations.

The National Socialist authorities realised by the autumn of 1942 that the low food rations, particularly of the "Eastern" workers, definitely impaired their capacity for work. An Order by the Reich Ministry of Agriculture and Food, of 6 October 1942<sup>5</sup>, admitted "frequent petitions" to have the rations of "Eastern" civilian workers and prisoners of war increased. This however could be done "only to a limited degree, owing to the food situation". Supplementary rations for night workers and workers with long hours were introduced and the potato and bread ration (the latter only for workers doing the heaviest type of work) was increased. Otherwise the Order acknowledged that "it has been ascertained that some of these categories of workers are underfed" but argued that this was often due, not to an insufficient amount of food, but to faulty preparation. The Order also strongly hinted that the camp canteens did not actually use all the food which they received.

By Decree of 6 October 1942, the Reich Minister of Food and Agriculture ordered that male and female "Eastern" workers<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 10 grams = 3.53 oz.; 1,000 grams = 1 kilogram = 2.2 lbs.

<sup>2</sup> *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 222 (2), supplement, 5 Nov. 1942.

<sup>3</sup> *Nährmittel* or "nutritious food products" is a broad term, including, according to the official German instructions, such items as barley, oatmeal, potato flour, cream of wheat, cream of maize, etc.

<sup>4</sup> 75 per cent. of which should consist of ingredients for the preparation of thin soup (*lose Suppen*), 10 per cent. for the preparation of bouillon and bread-spread (*Brühe, Pasten*), 10 per cent. for sauces and 5 per cent. condiments.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Ministerialrat DIETRICH: "Lebensmittelrationierung", in *Kommentar zur Reichsverteidigungsgesetzgebung*, Part V, Allg., p. 565.

<sup>6</sup> For the rations which at the same time came into force for non-German workers in the Government-General, see Appendix VI.



employed in German agriculture (and mining) and housed in camps were to receive the following weekly food rations:

Bread <sup>1</sup> . . . . .	2,600 grams
Meat . . . . .	250 grams
Fats <sup>2</sup> . . . . .	130 grams
Potatoes . . . . .	7,000 grams
<i>Nährmittel</i> <sup>3</sup> . . . . .	150 grams
Sugar . . . . .	110 grams
Tea substitute . . . . .	14 grams *
Vegetable . . . . .	if available <sup>4</sup>

For heavy forms of work, the first three items were fixed as follows:

	Workers on long hours and night shifts	"Heavy" work	"Exception- ally heavy" work	Underground miners
Bread . . . . .	2,600	3,400	4,400	4,400
Meat . . . . .	300	400	500	600
Fats . . . . .	150	200	260	300

The weekly ration of tea substitute for underground miners was also increased to 25 grams.

Fresh milk even if skimmed, could not be given to "Eastern" workers, but "Eastern" civilian workers and prisoners of war who were specially and considerably exposed to the effects of poisonous substances were entitled to receive unskimmed milk.<sup>5</sup>

It is interesting to note that these rations were, in several respects, lower than those in force in German concentration camps and police prisons in the summer of 1941.<sup>6</sup>

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In his commentary on the laws and regulations applying to foreign workers in Germany, Dr. Birkenholz, of the Reich Ministry of Armament and Munitions, speaking of conditions prevailing

<sup>1</sup> The Decree provided that, to facilitate the preparation of the thick soups to which Russians are accustomed, 360 grams of corn flour or 380 grams of rough-ground corn (*Schrot*) or 360 grams of corn groats might be substituted for 500 grams of bread.

<sup>2</sup> "If possible", the fat ration should consist of margarine.

<sup>3</sup> For these workers, the *Nährmittel* were to consist, if possible, always within the terms of the Decree, of millet, buckwheat, pastes and potato starch products.

<sup>4</sup> Vegetables (except turnips) might be issued only if the civilian supply situation permitted. But "vegetable refuse which has been left over after market days and which cannot otherwise be preserved from deterioration, must at once be despatched to foreign workers' camps".

<sup>5</sup> Decree by the Minister of Food and Agriculture, of 27 September 1939, confirmed by Decree of 6 October 1942.

<sup>6</sup> For further data on food rations, see Appendix VI.

in the summer of 1942, cited the following example as a typical illustration of the common feeding (*Gemeinschaftsverpflegung*) of foreigners who received the same food as their German fellow workers.<sup>1</sup> In the construction industry (public construction projects) the food consisted, per day, of one cold meal in the morning, one warm meal in the evening, and a soup (*Bunkersuppe*) to be given to labourers whose regular working time exceeded ten hours. "This soup should be distributed during the middle of the day at the place of work." Thus, persons working up to ten hours received only one warm and one cold meal per day. For the preparation of the extra midday soup for labourers working regularly more than ten hours per day, the camp canteens received, under the regulations issued by the German Ministry of Food and Agriculture, only "30 grams of meat with bones and approximately 50 grams of *Nährmittel*".<sup>2</sup> For this standard diet the foreigners had to pay between 1.00 RM and 1.20 RM daily.

In the spring of 1944, the weekly rations (in grams) of specialised Italian workers were<sup>3</sup>:

Fresh meat.....	350
Sausage.....	350
Butter.....	50
Sugar.....	200
Potatoes.....	1,000
Macaroni, spaghetti, etc..	400
Bread.....	1,750, plus 1,400 "supplementary bread ration".

At the same period, French workers employed in Germany received the following weekly rations (in grams)<sup>4</sup>:

Meat.....	750 (including 200 grams of sausage)
Fats.....	125
Sugar.....	120
Cheese.....	62
Bread.....	3,250 (including 400 white bread)

For "heavy" work and work over 55 hours a week, 800 to 1,000 grams of meat and 80 grams of fats were added.

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<sup>1</sup> *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 207.

<sup>2</sup> Order of 26 August 1942: *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 208, supplement, 30 Aug. 1942.

<sup>3</sup> *Basler Nachrichten*, 23 Mar. 1944 (evening edition).

<sup>4</sup> *Le Petit marseillais*, 9 Feb. 1944.

The foreigners were allowed to have their food prepared by cooks of their own nationality—themselves recruited workers—"if this was justified by the number of foreigners employed and by the size of the undertaking".<sup>1</sup>

As a matter of principle, foreigners catered for in mass canteens did not receive ration books.<sup>2</sup> Foreigners who wanted to buy rationed food had therefore somehow to obtain ration coupons. Hence, despite the risks involved, foreigners begging for ration coupons became a frequent sight in wartime Germany.

German newspapers frequently complained about "begging" foreigners and admonished the population not to give in to their requests. "By giving bread coupons to foreign workers some women encouraged hopes which led to the gathering of crowds of aliens outside and inside foodshops."<sup>3</sup> Police reports from Soest, Westphalia, in the winter of 1943-44, mentioned the arrest of Soviet workers begging for bread coupons or trying to exchange toys that they had made for bread coupons; this too was described as prohibited begging. On 13 February 1944 the *Essener National-Zeitung* expressed satisfaction that the use of trams was forbidden to "Eastern" workers, because they had been in the habit of going to the centre of the town to try to make purchases, although the sale of goods to them was forbidden. The Oberhausen edition of the same paper complained, however, on 25 February 1944, that "in spite of all official measures and admonitions, male and female Eastern workers have been molesting the population increasingly by begging. Unfortunately, it still occurs that the beggars are successful."

It should be noted that most camp inmates were also handicapped with regard to non-rationed foods, for the German authorities restricted the sale of foods which were temporarily or permanently free of rationing by other control measures, such as customers' identification cards, records of customers, housekeeping permits (*Kundenausweise*, *Kundenlisten*, *Haushaltausweise*), etc. Shopkeepers were forbidden under penalty to sell ration-free goods to customers not officially listed in these records or not provided with these documents.

In these circumstances, it is understandable that, regardless of the very severe penalties that awaited them if they were caught,

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<sup>1</sup> *Manual for Foreign Workers*.

<sup>2</sup> Foreign industrial workers who did not receive their food in factory or camp canteens but had to provide their meals individually, received "special ration cards for foreign civilian workers" (*Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 208, supplement 30 Aug. 1942). In order to facilitate control, applications had to be made through the employer. Workers coming from the German-occupied Soviet territories were not eligible for ration cards.

<sup>3</sup> *Essener National-Zeitung*, 3 Sept. 1944.

foreign workers were compelled to seek food on the black market. But black market prices were so high that the lower-paid categories of foreigners could not afford them.

In the summer of 1943, the German-sponsored Netherlands labour paper *Van Honk* mentioned that 10 RM were asked and even a loaf of bread was given in exchange for 50 grams of tobacco.<sup>1</sup> A year later a Swiss who had been employed for two years at the Hermann Göring Works in Linz reported that on the black market it was possible, especially in the Rhineland and Austria, to buy bread coupons at an average price of 7 RM for black, and 20 RM for white bread. At the Hermann Göring Works in Linz the rate for a cigarette was 1 RM, but for a coupon for 1 kg of white bread a whole package of cigarettes could be obtained.<sup>2</sup>

The only legitimate way in which some categories of recruited workers could add supplementary food to their inadequate rations was through parcels from home. Simplified customs procedures were introduced for gift parcels containing up to 2½ kg of potatoes.<sup>3</sup> French men and women workers were permitted to receive from France small parcels weighing up to 1 kg each; every two months, one parcel weighing up to 20 kg; and every month, 100 cigars or 300 cigarettes or 500 grams of tobacco, or an equivalent combination.

Duty-free importation was allowed for gift parcels for Hungarians<sup>4</sup>, Serbs<sup>5</sup>, and persons from the Baltic countries.<sup>6</sup>

Statistics are lacking, but it may be assumed that parcels from home brought no real relief to any great number of foreigners employed by Germany.<sup>7</sup> The families and friends of the absent

<sup>1</sup> *Van Honk*, 25 June 1943.

<sup>2</sup> *Tribune de Genève*, 22 Aug. 1944.

<sup>3</sup> BIRKENHOLZ, in *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 211, supplement, 5 Nov. 1942.

<sup>4</sup> On the basis of a special arrangement with a Budapest export and import firm, German-employed Hungarians were allowed to order a food package once a month, consisting of 1 kg of barley groats (*Eiergrauen*), 50 grams of green pepper, and 100 cigarettes or 100 grams of tobacco, for which they had to pay, through their employer, the remarkably high price of 6 RM to a specified German bank. Order blanks for these parcels had to be obtained from the Hungarian Consulate-General in Berlin (BIRKENHOLZ, *op. cit.*, p. 211).

<sup>5</sup> By a Decree of 10 March 1943 Serbs working in Germany were given permission to receive parcels of up to 20 kg (*Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 12-13, 5 May 1943, Part I, p. 262).

<sup>6</sup> The *Deutsche Zeitung im Osten* of 7 July 1942 reported that, under a Decree of the Reich Ministry of Finance, edibles destined for personal use were admitted duty-free provided the consignment did not exceed the needs of the addressee; tobacco was also admitted (in the same quantities as were allowed to French workers). Unused clothing, underwear, soap and soap substitutes could also be exempted from import duties.

<sup>7</sup> The agricultural regions under German domination had to furnish food to the Reich to the limit of their capacity. According to an editorial in the *Deutsche Bergwerks-Zeitung* of 25 April 1944 it was stated that "the agricultural surplus of the Eastern territories annexed to the Reich increased from 177,000 tons of wheat (*Brotgetreide*) in the first year of war to 825,000 tons in the fourth and has by now probably reached the million ton mark".

workers were not often in a position to purchase food or tobacco for them regularly; and no large quantities of parcels could be transported in wartime Europe. For real relief, the majority of the foreigners would have needed every month at least 10 or 15 kg of additional food of high nutritive value. For a non-German civilian labour force of only 8 million that would have meant the monthly transportation of between 80,000 and 120,000 tons of food parcels, or 8,000 to 12,000 freight car loads of 10 tons each. Not even a small fraction of such an amount of food could be supplied by the families of the German-employed workers, or handled by the railways of the continent.

In the later stages of the war the German authorities emphasised that differences between foreign workers and German workers had been abolished and that foreigners were even entitled to receive the occasional special rations distributed in the Reich. There is however abundant evidence that as a general rule conscripted workers did not receive the same amount of food as Germans. This was proved, for instance, by the readiness of foreign workers to do extra work after their long regular working hours, for example, on farms, mostly in order to get extra food. The Commissioner-General for Manpower laid down that there was generally no objection to the extra work but that it was a punishable offence to reward it with food or clothing.<sup>1</sup>

After the introduction of the emergency régime in the summer of 1944, employers were given full jurisdiction over their workers, whether German or foreign, in all matters concerning labour discipline. An employee whose output was insufficient or who absented himself from work without due cause was to be punished by the employer by the curtailment of his food ration. In August 1944, *Gauobmann* H. Bangert (Düsseldorf) ordered that civilian workers from the East whose output was higher than that of a German, were to be rewarded by an additional daily ration of cold food; these rations had to be deducted from the rations of the "less willing" workers in the group.<sup>2</sup>

### CLOTHING

Foreign workers were required to bring their own clothing with them. For example, the instructions of 4 May 1942 for foreign industrial workers contained the following rule:

The foreign worker must bring with him a complete outfit of working clothes, including shoes, underwear and overcoat. At present, the opportunities of acquiring these articles in Germany are limited.

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<sup>1</sup> *Essener National-Zeitung*, 31 Aug. 1944.

<sup>2</sup> *Deutsche Bergwerks-Zeitung*, 26 Aug. 1944.

Every French worker recruited for Germany had to take with him work clothing, warm underwear, good footwear, two pairs of sheets and two pillowslips. To emphasise the importance of this rule, the instructions stated: "You are not entitled to a clothing card or to a shoes coupon in Germany".<sup>1</sup> In the spring of 1943, when 250,000 French prisoners of war were transferred to the free labour market in Germany, Castagnet, the leader of the (Vichy) French delegation for French workers' welfare in Germany, declared that the first problem was to procure civilian clothes for them.<sup>2</sup>

Workers' contingents from Italy were also instructed to bring their clothes with them. The Italian paper *Il Sole* reported as early as March 1941 that the Fascist Federation of Agricultural Workers had

decided to make it obligatory for every departing worker to carry with him the outfit which will best equip him for the requirements of the locality where he is going to work (Sunday clothes, workday clothes, boots, chest or bag, raincoat, aluminium pot). Travellers not in possession of the prescribed equipment will be immediately sent back to the place from which they started.

Similarly, the *Corriere della Sera* on 12 February 1941 reported on the despatch of 204,000 Italian industrial workers: "These Italian workers will leave Italy in uniforms, and will be completely equipped".

The instructions issued by Fritz Sauckel said:

When foreigners are recruited for work in Germany, they must be ordered to take clothes and footwear with them. In cases where this is impossible, and also when their clothes have become unwearable and must be replaced, the foreign workers are to be supplied with coats and footwear, with due consideration for wartime restrictions, and only in order to protect them against the hazards of weather as far as this is necessary for reasons of health.<sup>3</sup>

Only at certain times and occasions could the foreign worker acquire articles of clothing. In 1942, for example, an Order issued by the Reich Director for Clothing and Related Industries provided that working clothes should no longer become the property of the foreigners, but should only be lent to them in cases of indispensable necessity<sup>4</sup>:

If, for exceptional reasons, clothes have to be supplied, they must thenceforward remain the property of the undertaking and are only to be rented out to the workers.

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<sup>1</sup> *Instructions pour la main d'œuvre embauchée pour l'Allemagne*: "Workers must obtain from their mayor's office special coupons for clothes and shoes before their departure, for they will not be granted any coupons in Germany. They must also take with them a blanket, sheets and pillowcases" (*L'Atelier*, 17 Oct. 1942).

<sup>2</sup> *Pariser Zeitung*, 21 Apr. 1943.

<sup>3</sup> Quoted by MENDE, *loc. cit.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

Employers are only permitted to issue these clothes when absolutely necessary, that is, if otherwise there is a likelihood that the worker would not be able to continue his work.

The foreigner is required to return the working clothes upon termination of his work. He has to do so even if the clothes have become unwearable and can no longer be mended.

In order to prevent foreign workers from taking working clothes with them after termination of their work, a certain sum<sup>1</sup> shall be deducted from their wages as deposit. This deposit should be fixed as high as possible, but should not exceed the value of the borrowed clothes.

For the use of the clothes, the worker must pay a fee which is to be deducted from his wages. This fee is to be fixed by the various undertakings in such a way as to ensure that the expenses of foreigners for their working clothes are never lower than the expenses to be borne by German workers, who do not participate in this scheme.

Another Order laid down that foreign workers in Germany who were not in possession of a ration card for clothes might receive every three months a coupon enabling them to buy 0.20 RM worth of sewing material; applications for these coupons had to be submitted by the employers. "Supplies permitting", the Economic Boards (*Wirtschaftsämter*) were allowed to issue coupons for footwear and, if sole leather was available, coupons for sole leather to those able to do resoling themselves.<sup>2</sup>

Foreigners were invited to ask their families and friends at home for clothing. By the autumn of 1942, the clothing situation of the "Eastern" workers had become so calamitous that Fritz Sauckel acknowledged an "emergency situation" (*Notstand*).<sup>3</sup> He asked the Reich Minister of Economics to earmark for them a "considerable portion" of the clothes collected from civilians throughout Europe in 1942 for the army on the eastern front, but he pointed out that this supply "meets only the most pressing and

<sup>1</sup> Oberregierungsrat F. H. SCHMIDT (Berlin) noted that employers were also allowed to ask foreigners for a deposit in kind ("Die neuen Richtlinien für den Bezug von Arbeits- und Berufskleidung", in *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 5, 1943, Part V, p. 75).

<sup>2</sup> Circular by the Reich Minister of Economics, of 16 August 1940 (quoted in Order by the Reich Minister of Labour, 5 December 1940); *Ausländische Arbeiter*, pp. 229-230. The same Order by the Reich Minister of Labour forbade foreigners with no permanent residence, such as the crews of ships and tugs, and migratory workers, to have their shoes repaired more than once every five months. Every repair must be recorded on the migratory worker's registration card (*Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 228). After January 1943, leather substitutes could only be legally sold to "self-repairers" against special coupons (Decree by the Reich Minister of Economics, 16 January 1943; *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 2, Part I, p. 26).

Here again, foreigners were hampered by the widespread use of customers' records. "A consumer may only ask a shoe-repair store to repair his shoes and the store may only accept them if he is properly listed on the customers' record of the particular store" (Art. 2V, Order by the Reich Ministry of Economics, 16 January 1943).

<sup>3</sup> "Memorandum for employers and local farm leaders concerning the supply of clothes to Eastern workers" (undated), in *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 1010 (7211), supplement, 15 Oct. 1942.

most critical demands". A special campaign was therefore arranged in the German-occupied eastern territories to persuade workers' families to send winter clothes, shoes and other wearing apparel to their relatives in Germany. As an inducement, the office of the Commissioner-General for Manpower promised to pay up to a maximum of 250 roubles (25 RM) to the senders. A standard letter in Russian and Ukrainian, purporting to be written by the worker himself, was distributed among them and they were urged to sign it and send it to their families without additional personal comment. The form letter pointed out that its sender was equipped only with the summer clothing he wore when he left his country and that this campaign offered a unique opportunity, which would never occur again, to supply him with warm clothes and other apparel he had left at home.

Devices of this sort did not ease the situation; and "Eastern" workers were not the only workers who had often to work barefoot and in ragged clothes.

Applications for clothing and shoes could not be made individually, but only by the employer. On this subject, the circular by the Reich Minister of Economics of 18 December 1942 stated:

The employer is personally responsible that applications be made only for articles which by the strictest standard are indispensable to maintain the "Eastern" worker's capacity to work.<sup>1</sup>

An Order issued on 6 October 1944 stipulated that in general clothes were to be supplied to foreign workers only on surrender of their old clothes, since the production of clothes for them could only be continued if enough rags were forthcoming. In the labour camps all clothes no longer useable should be collected by the employers and handed in. The money raised by their sale should be used by the firm for the benefit of the foreigner.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> On 18 Dec. 1942 the Reich Minister of Economics officially stated that "Eastern" workers were "often supplied with an insufficient amount of clothes and shoes", and that "appropriate measures" must be taken. He asked the Reich Central Agency for the Textile Industry (Deputy Reich Chief Dr. Otten) to devise "special types of clothing for male and female Eastern workers". Accordingly, with the approval of Sauckel, a "special programme" was decided upon for the manufacture of a low-quality "special type of clothing and underwear on a considerable scale"; for men: lined jackets and trousers; for women: lined jackets, skirts and blouses. It was stated that "at present, overcoats can be supplied only from stocks of old clothes and only if evidence is produced that they are absolutely necessary for the worker's special task".

The German regulations prescribed that shoes for "Eastern" workers must be "all wooden, or with wooden soles and two straps, or galoshes with wooden soles". The upper part "should consist mainly of material other than leather".

The employers' applications had to be verified by the Economic Boards (*Wirtschaftsämter*). If the Board had several supply stores (*Auslieferungsstellen*) "the requisitions will be filled in the order of their urgency, because at the present time only a part of the demand can be met".

<sup>2</sup> *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 25 Oct. 1944.



## BEDDING

The poor quality of most of the mass quarters and sleeping facilities (mainly straw-stuffed mattresses) and the frequent lack of heating made the procurement of bedding equipment a problem which continued to vex the workers and to occupy the attention of the German authorities:

Before foreign workers are placed at the disposal of German employers the latter must indicate in their applications whether or not they will be able to furnish bedding if their demand is granted. If the employer does not possess a supply of bedding, every foreign worker must bring two sets of bed linen from home.<sup>1</sup>

In a Decree dealing with the shortage of bedding, issued as early as 28 August 1941, the Reich Minister of Economics ordered that non-German male workers must no longer be supplied with bedding.<sup>2</sup> The instructions of 4 May 1942 for foreign industrial workers warned them that "in Germany it is in many cases impossible to supply male workers with any bedding whatsoever, while for women workers only the most indispensable bedding is available".

The Reich Farmers' Leader, in a letter addressed to all provincial and regional German farm boards, commented upon the difficulties of procuring bedding from Italy for Italian agricultural workers:

My efforts to secure bed linen for the Italian agricultural workers through the intermediary of the Fascist Corporation of Agricultural Workers have been of no avail. Since there are at present no other possible means of supplying Italian agricultural workers with the necessary bedding, I recommend advising the Italians that they have their own bedding sent from home. I have made arrangements with the Reich Ministry of Labour and with the Central Inspectorate of the Italian Corporation of Agricultural Workers for Germany, to the effect that the cost of the despatch of the bedding will be paid by the [German] employers, and that furthermore the Italian workers will receive compensation for the use of this bedding.<sup>3</sup>

In view of the precarious situation, the Reich Ministry of Armament and Munitions issued through its own local offices (*Aussenstellen*) a limited amount of bedding for foreigners employed in the armament industry. These local offices would issue special coupons entitling foreign armament workers to receive "one woollen

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<sup>1</sup> BIRKENHOLZ, *loc. cit.*, p. 205.

<sup>2</sup> This Order was promulgated by the Commissioner-General for Manpower after an interval of eight months, on 24 April 1942, and was published after a further interval of six months in *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 30, 25 Oct. 1942, Part I, p. 457.

<sup>3</sup> This circular was communicated to the German labour offices on 19 Nov. 1941, and published in *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 624 (1), supplement, 15 Sept. 1942.

blanket and one horseblanket" ("with certain limitations") as well as one towel for men and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  towels for women.<sup>1</sup>

This measure served more to draw attention to the shortage of bedding than to relieve it. By the autumn of 1942, the scarcity became so marked that even Germans called up for compulsory labour service or to undertake employment away from their home town, were ordered to bring their bedding with them<sup>2</sup>, and a Decree by Sauckel of 18 February 1943<sup>3</sup>, reiterated that employers did not need special consent from the Reich labour trustee or special Reich labour trustee in order to pay the workers appropriate compensation—for instance, 5 Rpf. per day—for the use of their own bedding. However, as in the case of the German appeals for food packages and clothing, the occupied countries were too much impoverished to fulfil German requests for bedding.

#### VERMIN IN THE WORKERS' CAMPS

The spread of vermin is a fair indication of the quality of mass housing. Once conditions fall below a minimum standard, vermin cease to be a mere nuisance and become a serious threat to health.

The workers' camps were infested with vermin, owing to insanitary housing; and the situation was aggravated by the enforced dirt of their inhabitants, who lacked clean clothing, clean bedding, clean underwear, hot water, washing facilities and other essentials of a hygienic life. There was not enough machinery for disinfection. In order to save essential material, the Reich Ministry of the Interior, in a Decree of 4 January 1943<sup>4</sup>, ordered that "machinery for the disinfection of lodgings of foreigners employed in armament plants may be provided only if their number exceeds 4,000"; camps containing less than 4,000 but more than 500 foreign workers were to receive substitute disinfecting machinery, working with dry heat or chemicals.<sup>5</sup> However, experiences with dry heat were unfavourable.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> BIRKENHOLZ, in *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 209 (2), supplement, 15 Oct. 1942.

<sup>2</sup> Circular by the Commissioner-General for Manpower, of 8 October 1942; *Arbeitseinsatz und Arbeitslosenhilfe*, Dec. 1942, p. 186.

<sup>3</sup> *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 7, 5 Mar. 1943, Part I, p. 167.

<sup>4</sup> Order by the Commissioner-General for Manpower of 8 February 1943; *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 7, 5 Mar. 1943, Part I, p. 160.

<sup>5</sup> Circular of 13 February 1943; *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 15 Mar. 1943, No. 8, Part I, p. 182.

<sup>6</sup> Research carried out by the procurement agency of the *Wehrmacht* showed that leather, fur, rubber and their substitutes suffered when exposed to hot air even of 60-80°C. In order to prevent damage to clothes and equipment, Dr. Paetzold of the Office of the Commissioner-General for Manpower ordered that wearing apparel made of leather, fur, rubber or their substitutes must not be exposed to temperatures above 35°C. The use of hydrocyanic acid for the disinfection of clothing and utensils of foreigners, particularly "Eastern" workers, was recommended as the cheapest and most efficient method (Dr. PUNTIGAM in *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 30, 25 Oct. 1942, Part V, p. 564).

In March 1944 the official organ of the Reich Labour Ministry and the Commissioner-General for Manpower published a summary of the situation.<sup>1</sup> Dr. Peters, a physician and expert on vermin extermination, discussed the disastrous spread of vermin in the camps and reported that the countermeasures taken by the German authorities had merely been a palliative and did not cope with a serious situation that had begun in the early period of the war and had continued for years. Dr. Peters wrote:

There have been bedbugs in Germany before the war, but never did they become a problem of labour protection, never did they occur in such masses as to drive thousands of workers from their sleeping places and often seriously to curtail their efficiency. Fleas were exterminated in Germany before the war, but now there are such masses of them in many hutment camps that they, too, decisively decrease the inmates' capacity to work.

Bedbugs and fleas impair, Dr Peters continued,

the working capacity of our armament industry (and, incidentally, in the occupied territories, the fighting capacity of our soldiers as well); clothes lice are even more dangerous, because they spread infectious diseases.

The plague of vermin spread, at times, like an explosion, so that it was impossible to cope at once with the demands for material and expert personnel. Some 1,000 vermin extermination undertakings, using thousands of tons of carbon disulphide, sulphur, prussic acid, etc., hardly sufficed to eliminate the worst cases or even to mitigate the plague.

The Armament Ministry therefore organised a special Vermin Disinfection and Plague Protection Committee (*Arbeitsausschuss Raumentwesung und Seuchenabwehr*) as a central extermination and research agency. "But", asks Dr. Peters,

where should we, in view of the notorious scarcity of raw materials, find even substitutes for disinfectants? All the Committee was able to do was to ask the German Association for Protection against Vermin to test "all the chemicals which are still available".

By March 1944 no reliable method had as yet been discovered: "it would be too early to report about the result of these investigations". The Armament Ministry's Committee was equally unable to solve the personnel problem:

The few firms with trained personnel were ordered to concentrate on cases of extreme urgency, since they could not possibly cope with the huge task of carrying out measures to be taken in the workers' camps. Therefore, attempts are now being made to have this job done by untrained camp guards and to provide them with substitutes<sup>2</sup> which at least may keep the less infected areas under control or keep a disinfected camp clean as long as possible.

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Gerhard PETERS: "Die Scheuerentwesung also wirksames Behelfsverfahren zur Ungezieferbekämpfung in Gemeinschaftslagern", in *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 8-9, 25 Mar. 1944, Part III, pp. 35-37.

<sup>2</sup> Some of the substitute solutions were tar residues containing phenol.

## CHAPTER X

### THE REGULATION OF WAGES

Unless the wages of labour recruits were fixed by agreements between Germany and authorities of the recruits' home countries, in a very great majority of cases, they were unilaterally determined by wage regulations (*Tarifordnungen*). These wage regulations were issued periodically by the Reich labour trustees, and covered either Germans and non-Germans, or only non-Germans, or only Germans. As mentioned before, with the appointment of Fritz Sauckel as Commissioner-General for Manpower, the Reich labour trustees were put under his authority, and had to report to him, instead of to the Reich Minister of Labour. Thus, from the spring of 1942, Sauckel was responsible for the unilateral determination of wage conditions. On special occasions, particularly when wide regulations concerning Soviet and Polish workers were to be introduced, the Reich War Cabinet itself issued decrees concerning the wages and working conditions of conscripted workers.<sup>1</sup>

Only in extremely rare cases (such as those of very highly skilled specialists from western or north-western Europe) were non-Germans in a position to negotiate their own wages or salaries by individual bargaining. But towards the end of 1942 it was decided that

for reasons connected with the war the determination of individual [wages and] working conditions could no longer be left to the employers but had to be put into the hands of the Reich labour trustees. The centralised regulation of [wages and] working conditions has been pushed to the farthest point in the instructions issued by the Commissioner-General for Manpower concerning wages in the armament industry.<sup>2</sup>

As has already been pointed out in another connection, the wage regulations issued by the Reich labour trustees differed fundamentally from genuine collective labour agreements negotiated

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<sup>1</sup> See p. 128.

<sup>2</sup> *Die Deutsche Volkswirtschaft*, No. 4, Feb. 1943, p. 116.

between an employer or a genuine employers' organisation and genuine representatives of the employees.

In two technical respects, the wage regulations differed from collective agreements of the pre-Hitler period. Collective wage regulations covering only one firm ("firm contracts") had "completely disappeared". Even wage schemes valid for all firms of the same category located in the same city had "almost completely disappeared". Instead, the same collective wage regulations applied to a given industry in a wider geographical area, sometimes containing several provinces; in fact, many important wage schemes covered the whole territory of Germany ("Reich contracts"). This trend had already become apparent in the early stages of the war. After a detailed survey of collective labour regulations, the Institute for Labour Research of the German Labour Front found that out of 2,110 of those in force on 1 January 1941, 237 were "Reich" regulations (*i.e.*, covered all firms of the same category in the whole of Germany). The tendency was especially marked in public undertakings; no fewer than 20 of the 28 collective wage regulations for employees of public undertakings were applicable throughout the territory of Germany.<sup>1</sup>

Before the war, collective regulations covered either wage earners or salaried employees, but not both. Even in the case of single "firm contracts" salaried employees would be covered by one contract, and wage earners in the same undertaking by another. Since the war, however, more and more collective regulations covered both wage earners and salaried employees. Of the 2,110 collective regulations surveyed in the study made by the Institute for Labour Research, 1,728 applied to wage-earning employees<sup>2</sup>, 199 covered both wage earners and salaried employees<sup>3</sup>, and only 183 dealt separately with salaried employees. Difficulties had often arisen in the past in deciding whether an individual was to be classified as a wage earner or salaried employee; thus the new trend towards unified wage and working conditions for both categories resulted in considerable simplification.

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The wage regulations in force for non-German workers varied widely, according to the National Socialist policy of discriminating

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<sup>1</sup> *Soziale Praxis*, 15 June 1941, p. 387.

<sup>2</sup> Including 479 collective regulations for home industry.

<sup>3</sup> Of these 199 regulations, 183 were in force in private industry and 16 in public enterprises.

between the various nationalities of Europe. The millions of workers imported from the East had to work under "special conditions", which are discussed below. The wages of workers who came from the south-east and south of Europe (the Balkans, Italy and Spain) were to a large extent determined by Government agreements.

## WESTERN AND CERTAIN CENTRAL EUROPEAN WORKERS

### *Wages*

If a non-German worker did not belong to a category which was the object of the severest discrimination (Soviet workers, Poles, and Jews<sup>1</sup> of all nationalities), and if he did not belong to a category of workers whose wages were determined by Government agreements, he was, "as a matter of principle", entitled to the same wage as a comparable German worker. This rule applied first of all to workers from France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark, Norway, and the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia.<sup>2</sup>

Several important points have to be remembered in order to appreciate the real effect of the rule that, as a matter of principle, favoured categories of non-Germans were entitled to the same wages as Germans doing comparable work.

(a) The nominal hourly wages which the workers were, at best, allowed to receive were pre-war rates, since a general wage stop came into force in Germany in the second month of the war (16 October 1939).<sup>3</sup> The German authorities were determined to keep basic wages and salaries "frozen" throughout the war, and were, on the whole, successful in this effort. How rigidly hourly wages were "frozen" in Germany can be seen from the fact that the average hourly wage rate in all industries for German workers was, in December 1941 (in pfennigs), for skilled male workers, 80.8; for male helpers, 63.9; for female helpers, 44.5. In December 1943, the figures were 81.0, 64.1 and 44.7, respectively.<sup>4</sup>

German pre-war net money wages and German pre-war real wages were lower than those of some, though not all, of Germany's neighbours. The movement of gross and net weekly earnings of German industrial workers from 1929 to 1937, as calculated by the Reich Statistical Office, was as follows:

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix II.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Herbert KNOLLE, Regierungsrat in the Reich Ministry of Labour, in *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 246.

<sup>3</sup> Decree of 12 October 1939, promulgated on 16 October 1939; *Reichsgesetzblatt*, Part I, p. 2028.

<sup>4</sup> *Wirtschaft und Statistik*, Apr. 1944, and *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 15 Mar. 1942, quoted in *Monthly Review* (Washington, D.C.), Aug. 1944, p. 408.

GROSS AND NET WEEKLY EARNINGS OF INDUSTRIAL WORKERS IN GERMANY, 1929-1937<sup>1</sup>

Year	Gross weekly earnings <sup>1</sup> (RM)	Deductions for taxes and employees' social insurance contributions		Net weekly earnings (RM)
		Amount in RM	Percentage of gross earnings	
1929	44.09	5.29	12.0	38.80
1930	40.61	4.87	12.0	35.74
1931	35.73	4.47	12.5	31.26
1932	29.51	3.69	12.5	25.82
1933	30.16	3.77	12.5	26.39
1934	32.36	4.21	13.0	28.15
1935	33.15	4.31	13.0	28.84
1936	34.39	4.64	13.5	29.75
1937	35.59	4.80	13.5	30.79

<sup>1</sup> Average for Mar., June, Sept. and Dec.

Since 1937 no official German calculation has been available. But the movement of average gross weekly earnings between 1938 and 1942 (*i.e.*, a continuation of the first column of the above table) has been calculated from the German official statistics.<sup>2</sup> The gross average weekly earnings continued to rise until, in September 1942, it reached, for the first time in 13 years, the 1929 level. It must be noted that in other industrial countries the 1929 gross weekly wage level was surpassed long before, and that the German upward trend in the gross average weekly earnings was in fact due to a longer working week. The upward trend in the gross average weekly earnings was accompanied by a similar trend in the deductions. As said before, official German statistics concerning average deductions have been lacking since 1937, but it can fairly be assumed that deductions for tax and employees' social insurance contributions rose from 13.5 per cent. in 1937 to 14 per cent. in 1938 and 1939, and 15 per cent. in 1940, 1941 and 1942. This assumption is based on the fact that, since the wage tax was a progressive tax, increase of gross earnings caused an increased application of the higher tax brackets, with consequent increase of the average tax percentage; and in September 1939 a war supplement to the wage tax was introduced. The movement of gross and net

<sup>1</sup> René LIVCHEN: "Net Wages and Real Wages in Germany", in *International Labour Review*, Vol. L, No. 1, July 1944, p. 66. Unless otherwise indicated, the following section is based on this article and the article by the same author, "Wage Trends in Germany from 1929 to 1942", *idem*, Vol. XLVIII, No. 6, Dec. 1943, pp. 714-732. In these articles, however, net and real wages in Germany are not calculated beyond 1941.

<sup>2</sup> For the years 1938-1941, quoted by René LIVCHEN, *loc. cit.*; for 1942 (Sept. only), *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 25 May 1943, Part V, p. 247.

weekly earnings of industrial workers in Germany from 1937 to 1942 may therefore be estimated as follows:

GROSS AND NET WEEKLY EARNINGS OF INDUSTRIAL WORKERS IN GERMANY, 1929 AND 1938-1942

Year	Gross weekly earnings (RM)	Deductions for taxes and employees' social insurance contributions		Net weekly earnings (RM)
		Amount in RM	Percentage of gross earnings	
1929	44.09	5.29	12.0	38.80
1938	37.31	5.22	14.0	32.09
1939	38.72	5.42	14.0	33.30
1940	39.89	5.98	15.0	33.91
1941	42.51 <sup>1</sup>	6.38	15.0	36.13
1942	44.16 <sup>2</sup>	6.62	15.0	37.54

<sup>1</sup> Mar., Sept. and Dec. only.

<sup>2</sup> Sept. only.

In September 1942, owing to a longer working week than in 1929, the *gross* weekly money earnings of industrial German workers thus reached the 1929 level for the first time; but the *net* weekly money earnings (owing to higher deductions than in 1929) had not yet reached the 1929 level.

Does the picture differ if, instead of nominal wages, a comparison of real wages is made, that is, of the purchasing power of the money earned? Here the question arises as to the reliability of the German official cost-of-living index, the weights for which were still based on family budget data for 1927-1928. Calculations made on the basis of German figures have led to the conclusion that for the last peace years (1937-1938) the official German cost-of-living index should be increased by 10 per cent. in order to take into account the changes that up to that time had actually taken place in German working-class consumption. In other words, purchasing power in the last two pre-war years must, according to these calculations, be assumed to have been nearly 10 per cent. lower than the official cost-of-living index indicated.<sup>1</sup> On this assumption, the movement of real gross and net weekly earnings of industrial workers in Germany was as follows:

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Otto NATHAN: "Consumption in Germany during the Period of Re-armament", in *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, Vol. LVI, No. 3, May 1942, p. 362; and Hilde OPPENHEIMER BLUM: "The Standard of Living of German Labor under Nazi Rule", in *Social Research*, Supplement V, 1943, pp. 38-39; both quoted by René LIVCHEN in "Net Wages and Real Wages in Germany", *loc. cit.*, p. 71.



# INDEX NUMBERS OF NOMINAL AND REAL WEEKLY EARNINGS OF INDUSTRIAL WORKERS IN GERMANY IN 1929, 1937 AND 1938

(Base: 1929 = 100)

Year	Official German cost-of-living index	Corrected cost-of-living index	Nominal gross weekly earnings	Real gross weekly earnings		Nominal net weekly earnings	Real net weekly earnings	
				according to official index	according to corrected index		according to official index	according to corrected index
1929	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1937	81.2	89.3	80.7	99.4	90.4	79.4	97.8	88.9
1938	81.6	89.8	84.6	103.7	94.2	82.7	101.3	92.1

Thus, according to the official calculations, the real gross weekly earnings of industrial workers in Germany would have averaged, in 1937, 99.4 per cent. of the 1929 earnings, and in 1938 would, for the first time, have surpassed those of 1929 by 3.7 per cent. Similarly, according to the official German calculations, the real net weekly earnings would, in 1937, have been 97.8 per cent. of those of 1929 and would, in 1938, have surpassed those of 1929 by 1.3 per cent. But according to the corrected cost-of-living index, the real gross weekly earnings amounted in 1937 only to 90.4 per cent. and in 1938 to 94.2 per cent. of the 1929 level, and the real net weekly earnings were likewise still considerably below the 1929 level, namely 88.9 per cent. in 1937 and 92.1 per cent. in 1938.

The official German cost-of-living index for the years 1939, 1940 and 1941 (calculated as for the preceding years, on the basis of the data for 1927-1928) were 81.9, 84.5 and 86.5 per cent. respectively of the 1929 level. It was thus officially maintained that the cost of living during the first years of the war was still considerably lower than the cost of living in 1929, while the nominal gross weekly earnings of industrial workers in Germany were officially calculated as 87.8, 90.5 and 96.4<sup>1</sup> per cent. respectively of the 1929 figure.

On the basis of these official cost-of-living indices, the real gross weekly earnings would have amounted to 107.2, 107.1 and 111.4<sup>1</sup> per cent. of the 1929 level. Similarly, while the nominal net weekly earnings for 1939 to 1941 were officially calculated as having amounted to 85.8, 87.4 and 93.1<sup>1</sup> per cent. of the 1929 level, the real net weekly earnings would have risen to 104.8, 103.4 and 107.6<sup>1</sup> per cent. of the 1929 level. Owing to wartime price control, wartime rationing and the scarcity of certain rationed and unrationed goods in Germany, which led to the development of an un-

<sup>1</sup> Mar., Sept. and Dec. only.

controlled sector in German economy, the black market, it is impossible to estimate the extent to which the official German cost-of-living indices—which continued to be calculated on the data of 1927-1928—should be corrected in order to give a realistic picture. It must be noted, however, that, in any case, the rise in the purchasing power of the wages as shown in the official calculations was due to an increase in the average working week, an increase which was absolutely and relatively greater than the rise, claimed by the official German statistics, in the net weekly earnings in German industries in the first years of war. For workers coming from countries with comparatively high wage levels, like the Netherlands, Denmark and Norway, the German wages compared unfavourably with those that they used to receive at home. On the other hand, workers from countries with a comparatively lower wage level, France, for example, received somewhat higher net wages for their longer working week in Germany than for their shorter working week at home. This advantage was, however, offset by the fact that during the war the cost-of-living rose much more quickly outside Germany, for example, in France. For that reason, and because the exchange rates established by Germany did not reflect the inflationary tendency of the other countries, the purchasing power of that part of their wages which these workers transferred to their dependants at home decreased as the war proceeded.

(b) In the western and north-western countries of Europe particularly, but also in other parts of the continent, both official recruiters (labour office agents) and unofficial recruiters (agents sent out by employers) tried to induce foreigners to volunteer for work in Germany by promising attractive conditions that would enable them to live comfortably and also to support the families that they would have to leave behind. There were numerous complaints from persons who had been promised (frequently in writing) favourable wages if they would only volunteer for work in Germany, and on arrival, were forced to accept employment at lower rates and, in general, under markedly less favourable conditions. In fact, the attractive offers had frequently been made with the consent of the German authorities. This was admitted in the regulations which required German employers to lower the wages and adjust the working conditions of foreigners as soon as they found out that they had committed an error, even if the German authorities had mistakenly given their consent.<sup>1</sup> Employers were required to communicate immediately with the Reich labour

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<sup>1</sup> *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 245.

trustee, asking for information on the wages and working conditions of a comparable German worker, in individual cases where such information was lacking or there was an element of doubt.<sup>1</sup>

(c) Especially in the early stages of the war, foreigners were, as a matter of policy, frequently put on jobs of a lower category than the work that they had done at home. Later on, the ever-increasing scarcity of labour forced the National Socialist authorities to discard the doctrine of German superiority for a more rational exploitation of foreign labour supply.

(d) Foreign workers were subject to the same deductions (tax, social insurance and Labour Front contributions, etc.) as Germans. These deductions were higher than in their own countries. German workers and their families could reckon on considerable future benefits in return, but foreign workers rarely received, during the war, the benefits or services to which they were theoretically entitled. Few foreigners, under wartime conditions, could qualify for unemployment insurance benefits or old-age pension; and if their health failed or they became unfit for work on account of invalidity, they were, as a rule, quickly removed from Germany.<sup>2</sup> Thus foreigners found themselves at a disadvantage, even if they received the same nominal wage as German workers.

(e) Newly arrived foreigners did not receive the full wage from the time that they started work. It was pointed out that German workers frequently had to have years of experience in a particular industry before they were ranked in the skilled-wage group.<sup>3</sup> A foreigner who was not accustomed to his work and surroundings had therefore to be content, for a period, usually six weeks, with the so-called "initiator wage" (*Einstelllohn*). The maximum rates for initiator wages were determined by administrative decree.

(f) Much more important was the general rule that foreign workers, even after the initiator period, were entitled to full wage rates only if their output reached the usual standard of the German undertaking in which they were employed.

(g) Lastly, the situation of most foreigners was complicated by the necessity of setting aside part of their earnings for transfer to their dependants at home. Since hardly any foreigners working in Germany were able to live in a common household with their families, their income (even if they received a separation bonus) "did not go as far" as the same income of a comparable German worker who lived at home with his family.

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<sup>1</sup> Decree by the Commissioner-General for Manpower, of 11 June 1942.

<sup>2</sup> See Chapter XIV.

<sup>3</sup> KNOLLE, in *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 244.

The cumulative effect of all these factors was so great that it became necessary for the German authorities to warn German employers to abstain from paying to foreigners a higher wage than to comparable German workers.<sup>1</sup> This warning became necessary, as Dr. Knolle, of the Reich Ministry of Labour, pointed out, because "in the struggle to secure for themselves as great a portion as possible of the scarce labour supply, employers have, here and there, violated the principle of absolute equality in the treatment of German and foreign workers", *i.e.*, they had granted higher wages to foreigners than to Germans.

A circular Order by the Reich Minister of Labour, of 24 September 1941<sup>2</sup>, severely criticised a promise made to foreign workers, in one part of Germany, in the timber industry, to pay wages at the rates in force in the German State forests, which were "considerably higher" than those usually paid in the private timber industry. "This", the Minister pointed out, "led to the most serious difficulties", because, on the one hand, "private undertakings were not in a position to pay the high wages promised to the foreigners", while, on the other hand, "great unrest developed among German workers on account of the more favourable treatment of the foreigners".

Allowances for children or wives were to be given to foreigners under the same conditions and on the same scale as to German workers, provided that

the conditions and requirements are fully met. In general, it will be for the foreigner to prove that the conditions and requirements have been fulfilled in his individual case. In some cases children's allowances and similar payments will be granted only if the children are given a German education. In those cases the foreigner will not be entitled to the allowances and payments unless he produces evidence that his children are receiving a German education.<sup>3</sup>

Foreigners were entitled to the same additional payments for extra work as comparable German workers. Some Government treaties also provided for overtime rates if the foreigner worked on his country's national holidays which were not celebrated in Germany. If no work was done on 1 May or other National Socialist holidays, the foreigner was nevertheless entitled to his "regulation wage".<sup>4</sup>

The official commentary on these rules by Dr. Knolle pointed

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<sup>1</sup> This rule was frequently emphasised in orders and regulations; for example, in the Decree by the Commissioner-General for Manpower, of 11 June 1942, concerning the wages of foreign workers in private employment; *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 258, supplement, 30 Aug. 1942.

<sup>2</sup> PETERSEN, in *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 656 (2), supplement, 5 Nov. 1942.

<sup>3</sup> *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 253 (1), supplement, 20 July 1942.

<sup>4</sup> KNOLLE, in *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 246 (1), supplement, 30 Aug. 1942.

out that the foreigner was also entitled to "social payments and social services", which were given to the German worker as of right, whether or not they were based on administrative wage regulations, collective agreements, firm contracts, or custom. But whenever payments or benefits were granted to comparable German workers, not as of right, but as a special concession, the German employer had to use his discretion to decide whether foreigners were eligible. In general, the comment continued, it would be safe to assume that foreigners could not participate in all those extra arrangements which resulted from a long relationship between the German worker and the German employer, and that the foreigner should not receive a bonus or allowance granted in observance of special occasions or events which played a specific role in German tradition. As an example, Dr. Knolle mentioned that a foreigner connected for only a short time with a German undertaking would not have the same appreciation of Christmas as a German.<sup>1</sup>

### *Separation Bonus*

Under various Government treaties, as well as unilateral German regulations, some categories of foreign workers were entitled to "separation bonuses" (*Trennungentschädigung*). The bonus was not meant to compensate the worker for separation from his family but to compensate the family for separation from its chief provider. Among the various conditions which the foreigner must fulfil before the bonus was granted, he (or she) had therefore to provide evidence that before leaving for Germany he (or she) had actually supported the persons now claimed to be dependants. In the case of a Croat worker<sup>2</sup>, for example, members of his family living with him had to prove that they derived 70 per cent. of their income from the absent worker's remittances. Workers of all nationalities had to supply detailed information concerning family status, occupation, age, other sources of income, average living expenses and rents paid by their dependants. All this information, subject to penalties for false statements, had to be verified and officially attested by the local authorities of the home countries.

The German employer was authorised to pay separation bonus to a foreign worker provided that:

(1) the working place was so far from his home that it was impossible for him to live at home while employed;

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<sup>1</sup> *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 253.

<sup>2</sup> Order by the Commissioner-General for Manpower, of 5 May 1943; *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 25 May 1943, Part I, p. 306, No. 15.

(2) in equivalent circumstances the employer also paid an equal separation bonus to his German workers<sup>1</sup>;

(3) the foreigner could produce evidence that he was married, or, if widowed or divorced in his own country, that he used to live with his children of minor age in a common household. While unmarried men were ineligible for a separation bonus, an exception could be made for an unmarried Frenchman who used to live with a woman in a common household (*en ménage*), unless the woman had, after the man's departure, returned to her own family or otherwise moved from the place where she had lived with him.<sup>2</sup>

The normal rate of the separation bonus was 1.50 RM a day. If the bonus did not exceed this amount for every day of the worker's actual separation from his home, the employer was allowed to pay it without special authorisation from the Reich labour trustee. In special circumstances, the employer might apply to the Reich labour trustee for permission to pay a higher bonus. The usual rate of 1.50 RM had to be reduced by 0.50 RM if the worker received free lodging, and by an appropriate amount if he was provided with free meals or meals sold to him below cost price.

The employer was forbidden to pay separation bonus for days on which the worker through his own fault worked only part of the day, or not at all; if this occurred on a day preceding or following a Sunday or holiday he also lost the separation bonus for those days. If a foreigner was admitted to hospital, payment of separation bonus had to cease, beginning from the second day of hospitalisation.<sup>3</sup>

In particular cases two separation bonuses (one for the husband and one for the wife) might be paid: (a) if both husband and wife were working in Germany, but at different places; (b) if, during their absence from their own country, their household was maintained in the interests of their family; and (c) if they were in a position to prove the latter fact by an affidavit by an official authority.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Order by the Reich Minister of Labour, of 2 August 1940; *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 260.

<sup>2</sup> Order by the Reich Minister of Labour, of 23 September 1941; *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 269. The bonus could be paid only if the fact that the couple lived *en ménage* was proved by an affidavit of the mayor and countersigned by the competent branch office of the German Military Administration in France or by the German recruitment office. An Order by the Commissioner-General for Manpower, of 12 October 1942 (*Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 252), pointed out that Belgians who lived *en ménage* were not eligible for separation bonus.

<sup>3</sup> Order by the Reich Minister of Labour, of 3 May 1941; *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 267.

<sup>4</sup> Order by the Reich Minister of Labour, of 4 August 1941; *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 252.

It should be noted that German workers who were ordered to leave their regular residence in order to assume employment elsewhere, and whose situation therefore was in that respect comparable with recruited workers, received additional payments to which foreigners were not entitled. The special allowances for these German workers were either given as "separation bonuses" (*Trennungszuschlag*), "special allowances" (*Sonderunterstützung*), or "payment for faithful service" (*Treugeld*). These payments were borne partly by the employers, and partly by the labour offices. In certain circumstances, they could be accumulated.<sup>1</sup>

The "separation bonuses" were given to Germans who "as a result of their labour service or employment were placed so far distant from their former residence that they could not return home daily".<sup>2</sup> They usually amounted to 1.50 RM per day or 10.50 RM per week, but could be increased up to 19 RM per week<sup>3</sup> and could be paid over and above free board and lodging or board and lodging supplement, provided that the latter did not exceed ½ RM for lodging and 1 RM for board per day.

The "special allowances" could be granted to German workers if their transfer to another locality resulted in a decrease of their nominal wage and an adjustment was necessary to protect their economic situation and that of their families.

"Payment for faithful service" could be granted "in the case of conscription of Germans for employment of long duration". It was granted on application and its uniform rate was 26 RM per month.<sup>4</sup> All these special payments were exempt from taxation and were excluded in the computation of social insurance contributions. Lastly, German workers were often entitled to allowances for the purchase of working clothes, for particularly dirty work, etc.<sup>5</sup>

### *Taxation*

For taxation purposes, foreign workers were divided into three groups: a small minority exempt from German taxation; a majority which paid higher taxes in Germany than Germans; and a group which paid the same taxes as Germans.

The small minority of labour recruits exempt from direct taxation while working in the Reich owed this preferential treatment to the fact that the German authorities considered that they had

<sup>1</sup> Cf. "Manual for Labour Conscripts and Similar Categories", in *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 1941, Part I, p. 363, and Part V, p. 419.

<sup>2</sup> Circular by the Reich Minister of Labour, of 27 March 1941; *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, Part I, p. 164.

<sup>3</sup> "Manual for Labour Conscripts and Similar Categories", *loc. cit.*

<sup>4</sup> Circular by the Reich Minister of Labour, of 27 March 1941; *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, Part I, p. 164.

<sup>5</sup> *Schmutzgelde, Wegegelde, Bekleidungsgele, Fahrzeitentschädigungen*, etc.

not fulfilled a basic requirement for taxation, namely, establishment of a legal residence.

Some aspects of taxation of non-Germans employed in Germany were regulated by treaties for the prevention of double taxation between Germany and other countries. Almost all these treaties<sup>1</sup> provided that foreigners who received payment from public funds should be taxed by the country in which those public funds were administered. This rule applied in particular to the German State railways<sup>2</sup>, which employed a large number of non-Germans.

Where wages paid by private employers were concerned, some treaties reserved the right of taxation to the country in which the individual worker had his permanent residence, and others to the country in which he performed his work. The first principle was embodied in the treaties between Germany on the one hand and Denmark and Hungary<sup>3</sup> on the other; by a unilateral German Decree it was also applied to the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, which, for purposes of taxation, was considered "an outside territory". But under German legislation<sup>4</sup> this principle was of practical consequence only for married persons from Denmark, Hungary or the Protectorate who were working in Germany. Married persons coming to Germany from Denmark, Hungary, Bohemia or Moravia did not have to pay the German wage tax if their families continued to live in their own countries. These workers, although employed and living in Germany, were considered to have maintained their legal residence in their respective countries. But an unmarried person coming from any of these countries and employed in Germany was assumed to have established his residence (or at least his "regular domicile") there, from the moment that he entered the country, and he was therefore, under the "residence rule", subject to German taxation.<sup>5</sup>

Thus, only an insignificant number of foreign workers were exempt from German taxation. Nevertheless, the fact is of great legal and practical importance, for it shows that to a certain degree the German authorities thought it expedient not to impose taxes on certain nationals of certain countries.

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<sup>1</sup> One exception is contained in the *Schlussprotokoll*, 2, Art. 5, of the German-Swiss Treaty of 15 July 1931, for the prevention of double taxation, concerning railway, postal, telegraph and customs employees living in the German-Swiss frontier region.

<sup>2</sup> Oberregierungsrat Dr. H. ÖFTERING, in *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 278.

<sup>3</sup> Until 31 December 1941 it was also contained in the Treaty between Germany and Slovakia (*Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 278).

<sup>4</sup> Dr. H. ÖFTERING, in *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 279.

<sup>5</sup> Order by the Reich Minister of Finance, of 25 May 1942; *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 305.



In considering foreign workers who were subject to German taxation, a distinction must be drawn between Russians and Poles, and the other groups. The other groups were generally subject to the same taxation as German workers. Their situation was briefly as follows.

### *Wage Tax.*

Under the German income tax system, the income tax of persons earning wages and salaries was called "wage tax". The main differences between the wage tax and the income tax of other taxpayers were that the wage tax was always deducted from the wage or salary at the source, that is, by the employer (it was computed on the basis of official tax tables which took into account a flat uniform amount for deductible expenses of the taxpayer<sup>1</sup> and otherwise differentiated only between the marital status and the number of children and other dependants under 25 years of age); and that the wage tax payments made by the employer on account of the employee were final; that is to say, adjustments at the end of the taxable year were not foreseen in German law. Thus with two exceptions<sup>2</sup>, which were hardly ever applicable to foreign labour recruits, the worker never came into contact with the Revenue Office and never filed an income tax declaration.

During the early stages of the war, German law drew certain distinctions between different categories of foreign workers as regards the wage tax. These special provisions proved so complicated and created so much difficulty that, before the great influx of foreign labour recruits, they had to be retroactively abolished as from 1 January 1941, by a Decree of the Reich Minister of Finance of 25 April 1941.<sup>3</sup> From that date the wage tax, including war surtax, was deducted by the employer from the foreigner's wage or salary, in the same way as for German employees.<sup>4</sup>

In the spring of 1942 the whole system of the wage tax was overhauled and greatly simplified.<sup>5</sup> This simplified wage tax was

<sup>1</sup> Only if a taxpayer had incurred exceptional expenses which considerably lowered his financial capacity, the revenue offices, on special request, granted permission to deduct more than the uniform deduction from the taxable income of persons liable to wage tax.

<sup>2</sup> (1) If the wage-tax payer made more than 300 RM within the taxable year besides his wage or salary, or (2) if the wage or salary income exceeded 8000 RM during the taxable year.

<sup>3</sup> *Reichsgesetzblatt*, Part I, p. 247.

<sup>4</sup> Foreign workers who had their residence or regular domicile in the Reich (except the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia) were also required to pay wage tax for wages and salaries earned outside Germany during the taxable year (Decree by the Reich Minister of Finance, of 25 May 1941); *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 303.

<sup>5</sup> Order by the War Cabinet, of 24 April 1942; *Reichsgesetzblatt*, Part I, p. 252; and Order by the Reich Minister of Finance, of 14 May 1942; *Reichsgesetzblatt*, Part I, p. 297.

in force from 1 July 1942. It divided wage-tax payers into four groups; group I, single persons; group II, married persons who were childless after five years of marriage; group III, married persons who were childless within the first five years of marriage; group IV, married persons with children (or equivalent dependants of less than 25 years of age). Group IV was again subdivided for one, two, three, up to ten children. Wage earners with more than ten children were exempt from wage tax. One of the characteristics of the German wage-tax system was steep graduation according to family status. Thus the tax payable for the same income varied very greatly for the several tax groups. As will be seen from the following table, a childless married person during the first five years of marriage paid often only half, and persons with one or several children paid only a small fraction, of the tax payable by single persons in the same income bracket.

The following table gives some examples from the very detailed official wage-tax table, in force from 1 July 1942.

WAGE TAX FOR GERMAN WORKERS AND THOSE CATEGORIES OF FOREIGN WORKERS WHO PAID GERMAN WAGE-TAX RATES, IN FORCE FROM 1 JULY 1942<sup>1</sup>

Gross wage (RM)	Tax (RM)							
	Single	Childless married worker after 5 years of marriage	Childless married worker during first 5 years of marriage	Married worker supporting				
				1 child	2 children	3 children	4 children	5 to 10 children
	Tax group I	II	III	IV(1)	IV(2)	IV(3)	IV(4)	IV(5-10)
2.50 - 3.00	0.01	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
3.00 - 3.10	0.02	0.01	0.01	—	—	—	—	—
4.00 - 4.10	0.10	0.06	0.02	0.01	—	—	—	—
5.00 - 5.10	0.25	0.17	0.11	0.03	0.01	—	—	—
6.00 - 6.10	0.40	0.30	0.21	0.11	0.03	—	—	—
8.00 - 8.10	0.76	0.56	0.38	0.27	0.19	0.03	—	—
9.10 - 9.15 <sup>2</sup>	0.99	0.74	0.50	0.37	0.27	0.13	—	—
11.00 - 11.05	1.76	1.33	0.91	0.68	0.51	0.35	0.10	—
12.00 - 12.05	2.17	1.66	1.16	0.85	0.63	0.43	0.18	—
13.00 - 13.05	2.55	1.97	1.38	1.01	0.77	0.52	0.26	—
15.00 - 15.10	3.32	2.58	1.83	1.35	1.02	0.70	0.35	0.07

<sup>1</sup> Reichsgesetzblatt, 16 May 1942, Part I, pp. 301 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> Beginning with a daily wage of 9.10 RM the war surtax came into force. It is included in the above figures.

In 1929 the wage tax averaged 3.5 per cent. of the gross earnings of wage and salary earners. After a fall during the depression, it averaged 4.5 per cent. in 1937. Owing to the increase of the total

of nominal wages and salaries as a result of the increased working week, and to the introduction of the war surtax, this ratio must have increased during the war. However, it is to be assumed that the average deduction from the earnings of the foreign workers was below this percentage, because the higher averages include the wage tax also levied on the higher income brackets of salary earners, such as directors in factories, etc., that is, incomes which foreign workers never reached. But even with due allowance for this correction, the wage tax deducted from the foreigners' wages must have averaged 3 to 4 per cent. of their nominal income.<sup>1</sup>

### *Municipal Tax.*

Until 1 July 1942 (when the tax system was drastically simplified), foreigners had, like Germans, to pay a municipal tax (*Bürgersteuer*) if they lived in cities. It was computed and deducted by the employer. The tax rates, however, differed for Germans and for foreigners and were changed several times. They averaged 1 to 2 per cent. of the nominal wage. The computation "always led to considerable difficulties and many doubts".<sup>2</sup> After its latest revision, which came into force on 1 June 1941<sup>3</sup>, the municipal tax for foreign workers amounted to 1 per cent. of the wage beyond a certain minimum. From 1 July 1942 the tax was abolished and the wage-tax rates were correspondingly increased.

### *Parish Tax.*

Foreigners were liable to the same parish tax as Germans. The lower income brackets were exempt. For the others it probably amounted to a fraction of 1 per cent. of the nominal wage.

### *Contribution to the German Labour Front.*

Although membership in the German Labour Front was theoretically voluntary, actually every German worker had to belong to it. The membership fees were automatically deducted from the payroll by the employer. They ranged on the average between 8 and 10 per cent. of the wage tax, plus surtax, but exemptions were lower than in the case of the wage tax. Thus, with the exception

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<sup>1</sup> The share of the wage tax in the total tax receipts of the German Reich amounted for the budget years of 1924 and 1925 to 18 and 20 per cent. respectively. It fell to 15.7 per cent. in the budget year 1928 and to 11.8 per cent. in the budget year 1938. No data are available for the ensuing years.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. H. ÖRTERING, in *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 291.

<sup>3</sup> Order by the Reich Minister of Finance, of 25 April 1941; *Reichsgesetzblatt*, Part I, p. 247.

of the lowest income brackets, it may be estimated that the contribution to the German Labour Front averaged, during the war, approximately 1 per cent. of the workers' income.

Various categories of foreigners had to make the same contributions to the Labour Front.<sup>1</sup> For some groups, the contributions went to the German-dominated "Labour Fronts" which were established by collaborators in their respective countries.

### *Contribution to the Winter Help Fund.*

Another payment exacted from German workers and several categories of foreigners was the annual "Winter Help" contribution, also automatically deducted by the employer from the payroll. For all practical purposes, this contribution was compulsory. The usual rate was 10 per cent. of the wage tax<sup>2</sup>, but again with lower exemptions.

### *Iron Saving.*

The Government-sponsored "iron saving" programme consisted of regular semi-voluntary deductions from the payroll for the purchase of war bonds. The programme was, at the beginning, restricted to persons of German race. But by Order of the Reich Minister of Finance, of 22 December 1941, other workers were declared eligible, "in exceptional cases", to participate in the programme, "especially if they belong to a friendly nation".

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An official handbook, *Le travail en Allemagne et la famille*, issued in 1943 by the *Commissariat général à la main d'œuvre française en Allemagne* under the auspices of the Vichy Government, stated that German national and municipal taxes, social insurance contributions and Labour Front and "Winter Help" fees, according to wage level, region of employment, and family status, totalled between 10 and 30 per cent. of the gross wage for married French workers, and between 25 and 30 per cent. for unmarried French workers.

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<sup>1</sup> The total assets of the Bank of German Labour (the central banking organisation of the National Socialist labour organisations) were given at the end of 1942 as 3,681 million RM (the amount of treasury bills held by the Bank was given as 2,500 million RM). In 1939, the Bank's total assets had amounted to only 917 million RM (*Frankfurter Zeitung*, 21 Apr. 1943).

<sup>2</sup> *Der Deutsche Volkswirt*, No. 49, put it this way: "A German worker will not be considered to have fulfilled his duty to his community unless his contribution to the Winter Help drive corresponds to at least 10 per cent. of his wage tax".

## WAGES AND TAXES OF WORKERS FROM THE EAST

It was officially emphasised<sup>1</sup> that Polish and Soviet workers, as well as Jews of all categories, were "not parties to a labour contract" but were "in an employment relationship of a special character". This statement was not mere legalistic pedantry; it deprived workers to whom it applied of the normal rights of employees, which had been granted to other categories of foreigners. It also meant that, as a matter of principle, wage rates and tax rates applicable to Germans were not applicable to them without special provision to the contrary.

Special low wage rates were established for these categories of workers or, taking the wages of comparable German workers as a comparison, their wage rates were reduced by deduction of special taxes. In the early stages of the war, the wages of workers from the occupied eastern territories were so low that they scarcely enabled them to pay the standard rates for their mass quarters and feeding. This was particularly true of Polish agricultural workers and both industrial and agricultural Soviet workers. Polish industrial workers had to pay from 1 August 1940 a special 15 per cent. tax in addition to the German regular and wartime taxes<sup>2</sup> (before that time, the great majority of imported Polish workers were employed in agriculture). This special "social equalisation tax" (*Sozialausgleichsabgabe*) was said to be an equivalent, partly for the lower standard of living of the Polish workers, and partly for the fact that they were exempt from the contributions to the German Labour Front and sometimes also from contributions to the German social insurance system. For workers from the Soviet Union, a special "Eastern tax" (*Ostarbeiterabgabe*) was levied. This tax was so devised that no Soviet worker, whatever his nominal wage, could receive, after deduction of the tax, more than 17 RM a week. Later on the tax was gradually lessened, but it still remained high.

*Wages and Taxation of Polish Agricultural Workers*

The first group of foreign workers for whom special wages were introduced were Polish agricultural workers. A Reich-wide scheme was introduced on 8 January 1940.<sup>3</sup> For the purpose of calculating

<sup>1</sup> For example, by Decree of the War Cabinet of 20 January 1942; *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 27 Jan. 1942, Part I, p. 42.

<sup>2</sup> Decree by the German War Cabinet of 5 August 1940; *Reichsgesetzblatt*, Part I, p. 1094. The 15 per cent. tax was levied on conscripted Polish workers in the entire territory of Greater Germany except the Protectorate of Bohemia-Moravia, and in certain regions of pre-war Poland, in which lower wage rates applied instead.

<sup>3</sup> *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 2, 15 Jan. 1940; seven amendments, issued between January and November 1940, have also been taken into consideration.

the wages of Poles employed in agriculture, the territory of Greater Germany was divided into four "wage groups", group I of which had to pay the highest, and group IV the lowest wages. The various agricultural districts of Germany, Austria and the Sudeten region were grouped according to their productivity. For example, Westphalia, the Rhineland and the Saar Region were in wage group I; Thuringia, Saxony, south-western Germany and Brandenburg in wage group II; Pomerania, Silesia and parts of Austria in wage group III; and the Sudeten Region, Bavaria, and parts of southern Austria and East Prussia in wage group IV.

In all these four wage districts, Poles were working either on a monthly or an hourly basis. In the first case, they received free board and lodging in addition to their monthly wage; in the second case, they received free lodging, a wage in cash (calculated by the hour) and sometimes also in kind (free food rations, calculated by the week).

## MONTHLY WAGES FOR POLISH AGRICULTURAL WORKERS

(RM)

Age group	Wage district							
	I		II		III		IV	
	men	women	men	women	men	women	men	women
21 years and more	26.50	20.00	25.00	17.50	23.50	15.00	21.00	15.00
18-20 years	24.00	17.50	22.50	15.00	21.00	12.50	18.50	12.50
17 "	21.50	15.00	20.00	12.50	18.50	10.00	16.00	10.00
16 "	18.00	12.50	16.00	10.00	15.00	7.50	12.50	7.50
14 and 15 years	13.00	10.00	12.00	7.50	11.00	6.00	8.50	6.00

## HOURLY WAGES FOR POLISH AGRICULTURAL WORKERS

(Rpf.)

Age group	Wage district							
	I		II		III		IV	
	men	women	men	women	men	women	men	women
21 years and more	25	20	24	19	23	18	22	18
18-20 years	23	19	22	18	21	17	20	17
17 "	21	18	20	17	19	16	18	16
16 "	18	16	17	15	16	15	16	15
14 and 15 years	15	14	14	14	14	14	14	14

These hourly wages were reduced by 5 Rpf. per hour if the worker received the standard free food ration for Polish agricultural workers in Germany, composed of the following items (per week):

Potatoes.....	12.50 kg. <sup>1</sup>
Bread .....	3.00 "
Flour.....	0.375 "
Meat.....	0.50 "
Fats.....	0.25 "
Salt.....	0.25 "
Skimmed milk.....	7 litres <sup>2</sup>

Polish agricultural workers paid by the month were not entitled to additional payment for overtime, Sunday or holiday work. Workers paid by the hour had to work overtime at the regular rate, but they were entitled to a 25 per cent. increase for Sunday and holiday work.

For time lost because of bad weather, the workers were not entitled to pay, but continued to receive free lodging and the free food ration; if time was lost for other reasons, workers paid by the month had to pay their employers 0.90 RM per day for food and board, and workers paid by the hour had to pay 0.50 RM.

Workers who for physical or mental reasons were below average efficiency might receive proportionately reduced wages; the reduction was determined by the employer (if the German workers of the particular undertaking had the right to form a workers' council (*Vertrauensrat*), the employer had to consult the council). The employer had also to make a written report upon every such reduction to the Reich labour trustee, who might rescind it retroactively within one month.

Polish agricultural workers covered by this wage scheme were exempt from the special 15 per cent. Polish tax (*Sozialausgleichs-abgabe*). The wage scales were themselves so low that they left a considerable margin between the income of Polish workers and that of comparable German workers; this margin did not, however, go into the Treasury<sup>3</sup>, but remained with the Polish workers' employers, who were mainly the great land owners.

The difficulties of finding farm help induced some farmers to disregard the substandard wages prescribed by the German authorities for "Eastern" workers. As a countermeasure the Reich Minister of Finance ordered that whenever an "Eastern" worker received a<sup>4</sup> higher wage than that decreed by the Reich labour trustee in the general wage regulations, he was forbidden to keep the difference between the prescribed and the actually received

<sup>1</sup> 1 kg = 2.2 lbs.

<sup>2</sup> 1 litre = 0.95 quart.

<sup>3</sup> Decree by the Reich Minister of Finance, of 4 May 1941; *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 739. Some contingents of Poles employed in the Ruhr mining district and in the coal mines near Aachen were also exempt from the 15 per cent. special tax.

wage, but must pay it over to the tax office as an additional tax. The presidents of the tax districts had to inform the Reich labour trustees of these cases, and the trustees had to ensure that the wage was reduced to the permissible rate, and that, if circumstances required, the employer was punished for infringement of the wage regulations.<sup>1</sup>

### *Wage Conditions of Poles in the Warthegau*

Provisions concerning Poles employed by private industry in the part of western Poland known as the *Warthegau* were introduced by Order of 15 February 1942<sup>2</sup> (in force retroactively from 15 December 1941). As a matter of principle, the salaries and wages of Poles were to be 80 per cent. of the salaries and wages established by collective agreements, wage and salary tariffs, or local custom. If the efficiency of a Pole was above the average, the employer might grant efficiency bonuses, but wages and salaries including the efficiency bonuses must not exceed 90 per cent. of the salaries and wages stipulated in the collective regulations. German wages or salaries might be permitted, on application by the employer, by the head of the local labour office only for Poles who performed highly skilled work exceptionally well. As a general rule, no Polish salaried employee might earn a gross salary exceeding 310 RM per month.

If the output of a Pole fell below the average, the wage or salary might be reduced accordingly, provided that notice had been given by the employer to the local labour office and no objection was raised by the labour office within two weeks. On the other hand, the head of the local labour office was authorised to order reductions in the wages and salaries of Polish workers.

As far as possible, Poles were to be paid by piece rates. Unless collective rules, wage tariffs or plant regulations provided otherwise, the regular piece rates were to be reduced by 10 per cent. for Polish workers.

<sup>1</sup> Work done in excess of 60 hours a week (except for certain categories of workers such as doorkeepers, guards, and the like, whose regular working time was longer than 60 hours), if ordered by the employer or his representative, was to be paid at a 10 per cent. increase. Unless the wage tariff or the plant regulations provided for a lower rate, night work had to be paid at a 20 per cent. increase. For Sunday work a 20 per cent. increase was authorised. If two or more increases coincided, only one increase (the highest) was to be paid.

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<sup>1</sup> *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 4, 5 Feb. 1943, Part V, p. 62.

<sup>2</sup> *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 709 (1), supplement, 10 Aug. 1942.



*Industrial Wages for "Eastern" Workers*

On 20 January 1942<sup>1</sup>, the Reich War Cabinet, under the chairmanship of Reich Marshal Göring, imposed unprecedented taxes on the earnings of "Eastern" workers. These special taxes had to be deducted by the employer, and were retroactive for any wage or salary paid to an "Eastern" worker after 30 November 1941. The tax started at 0.50 RM for a weekly wage of 10.01 RM. Rising for every additional Reichsmark of income, the tax amounted, for example, to 7.40 RM for wages of 20.01 to 21 RM; to 15.50 RM for wages of 29.01 to 30.00 RM; to 24.50 RM for wages of 39.01 to 40.00 RM; to 39.70 RM for wages of 55.01 to 60.00 RM; and from weekly wages of more than 70 RM, the whole wage, minus 17 RM, had to be deducted as tax.<sup>2</sup>

In other words, an "Eastern" worker, whatever his nominal wage, could never receive more than 17 RM a week, while few of them received as much. From this wage the employer deducted 10.50 RM for shelter and food.

This system was applied until the end of June 1942. By Decree of 30 June 1942<sup>3</sup>, a new wage and tax scheme for "Eastern" workers was introduced. The new scheme was based on a comparison with the wages (before deductions) paid to a comparable German worker. For example:

	Daily wage of comparable German worker	Daily wage of "Eastern" worker
	(RM)	(RM)
Up to	1.40	1.60
	1.80 to 1.90	1.75
	2.90 to 3.05	2.15
	4.10 to 4.25	2.55
	5.80 to 6.00	3.00
	7.00 to 7.25	3.30
	8.00 to 8.25	3.50
	10.00 to 10.25	3.90
	12.75 to 13.00	4.45

Thus, in the lowest brackets (up to a daily wage, before deduction, of 1.80 RM) the wage of the comparable "Eastern" worker was identical to, or even a few pfennig higher than that of a German worker, to enable him to pay his employer the prescribed rate of 1.50 RM for shelter and food. In all the other brackets, the wage, before deductions, for the "Eastern" worker was very much lower than that of a comparable German

<sup>1</sup> *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 27 Jan. 1942, Part I, p. 42.

<sup>2</sup> This confiscatory tax did not apply to persons recognised as belonging to German *Volksstum*, and to persons from the district of Galicia in the Reich Commissariat *Ostland*.

<sup>3</sup> *Reichsgesetzblatt*, No. 71, Part I, p. 419.

worker; *e.g.*, half the German daily wage of 6.00 RM, and about a third of the German wage of 13.00 RM.

The difference between the German and the "Eastern" wage was not a profit for the employer, but for the Reich Treasury. The employer had to pay an "Eastern worker" tax, rounded to the difference between the low "Eastern" wage and the wage he would have paid to a comparable German worker. For example, a highly skilled Soviet worker, doing the same work as a German who would have received 13 RM a day, was entitled to 4.45 RM, while the tax which his employer had to pay for him to the Reich Treasury amounted to 8.25 RM per day. In the cases of specialists who, at the German rate, would have received more than 13.00 RM per day, the wage for the "Eastern" worker was increased by 0.05 RM for every additional 0.25 RM paid to a German who did the same work, while the "Eastern" tax increased by 0.20 RM (equalling, at that bracket, a tax rate of 80 per cent.).

The weekly rates for "Eastern" workers were drawn up in a similar way. Instead of a comparable German workers' wage of 20, 30, 40 or 60 RM, the "Eastern" worker received 14.70, 18.55, 20.65 or 25.20 RM, and the special "Eastern" tax was 4.90, 11.90, 18.90 or 33.95 RM. The weekly rate for shelter and food to be deducted by the employer remained uniformly 10.50 RM.

In the computation of "compensation" (for the term "wage" was often avoided in connection with "Eastern" workers, because they were not parties to a labour contract, but in an employment relationship of a special character) an illustration is provided by an official instruction by the Reich Minister of Finance, issued with the consent of the Commissioner-General for Manpower<sup>1</sup>, which mentioned the case of an "Eastern" worker who in one week lost two working days because of sickness. If in that case the comparable German worker's wage for a full week would have been 40 RM, the "Eastern" worker's "compensation" was 10.15 RM (whereas the amount he owed to the employer for lodging and food amounted to 10.50 RM). For purposes of comparison, the taxes of Germans, of Poles and of "Eastern workers" are shown in the table on p. 130.

From 1 May 1943, a number of improvements were introduced. Up to that time it had been expressly forbidden to give wage slips to "Eastern" workers (except agricultural and domestic workers). Henceforward they were to be given an itemised account showing their wages and deductions; the Commissioner-General for Manpower or his

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<sup>1</sup> *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 15, 25 May 1943, Part I, p. 306.

delegates were given authority to permit or to order employers to deduct for food and lodging less than the standard rate of 1.50 RM per day; and the Commissioner-General or his delegates, in agreement with the Reich Minister of Finance, was

TAXES OF GERMAN WORKERS, FOREIGNERS PAYING THE SAME TAX  
AS GERMAN WORKERS, POLISH WORKERS AND "EASTERN"  
WORKERS, ON 1 JULY 1942<sup>1</sup>

(RM)

Type of worker	Gross wage RM	Single	Childless married worker after 5 years of marriage	Childless married worker during first 5 years of marriage	Married worker supporting				
		Tax group I	II	III	1 child <sup>2</sup>	2 children	3 children	4 children	5 to 10 children
					IV (1)	IV (2)	IV (3)	IV (4)	IV (5 to 10)
Germans.....	up to 1.40	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Poles.....	"	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
"Eastern".....	"	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Germans.....	2.40	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Poles.....	"	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13
"Eastern".....	"	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40
Germans.....	3.00	0.02	0.01	0.01	—	—	—	—	—
Poles.....	"	0.24	0.23	0.23	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22
"Eastern".....	"	0.80	0.80	0.80	0.80	0.80	0.80	0.80	0.80
Germans.....	4.00	0.10	0.06	0.02	0.01	—	—	—	—
Poles.....	"	0.47	0.43	0.39	0.38	0.37	0.37	0.37	0.37
"Eastern".....	"	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.50
Germans.....	5.00	0.25	0.17	0.11	0.03	0.01	—	—	—
Poles.....	"	0.77	0.69	0.63	0.55	0.53	0.53	0.53	0.53
"Eastern".....	"	2.25	2.25	2.25	2.25	2.25	2.25	2.25	2.25
Germans.....	6.00	0.40	0.30	0.21	0.11	0.03	—	—	—
Poles.....	"	1.07	0.97	0.88	0.78	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70
"Eastern".....	"	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
Germans.....	8.00	0.76	0.56	0.38	0.27	0.19	0.13	—	—
Poles.....	"	1.73	1.53	1.35	1.24	1.16	1.00	0.97	0.97
"Eastern".....	"	4.45	4.45	4.45	4.45	4.45	4.45	4.45	4.45
Germans.....	9.10 <sup>3</sup>	0.99	0.74	0.50	0.37	0.27	0.13	—	—
Poles.....	"	2.13	1.88	1.64	1.51	1.41	1.27	1.14	1.14
"Eastern".....	"	5.25	5.25	5.25	5.25	5.25	5.25	5.25	5.25
Germans <sup>4</sup> .....	11.00	1.76	1.33	0.91	0.68	0.51	0.35	0.10	—
"Eastern".....	"	6.85	6.85	6.85	6.85	6.85	6.85	6.85	6.85
Germans.....	12.00	2.17	1.66	1.16	0.85	0.63	0.43	0.18	—
"Eastern".....	"	7.65	7.65	7.65	7.65	7.65	7.65	7.65	7.65
Germans.....	13.00	2.55	1.97	1.38	1.01	0.78	0.52	0.26	—
"Eastern".....	"	8.25	8.25	8.25	8.25	8.25	8.25	8.25	8.25
Germans.....	15.00	3.32	2.58	1.83	1.35	1.02	0.70	0.35	0.07
"Eastern".....	"	9.85	9.85	9.85	9.85	9.85	9.85	9.85	9.85

<sup>1</sup> Source: For German workers and foreigners paying the same tax as German workers: *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 16 May 1942, Part I, pp. 301 *et seq.* for Poles: Decree by the Reich Minister of Finance, of 5 June 1942, S 2921-335 III, reprinted in *Ausländische Arbeiter*, pp. 756 (6) *et seq.* supplement, 10 Aug. 1942; for "Eastern" workers: *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 2 July 1942, Part I, pp. 422 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> Or for other dependants under 25 years of age, except wife or husband.

<sup>3</sup> Beginning at a daily wage of 9.10 RM, the German worker and the foreigner paying German tax rate had to pay war surtax, which is included in the above figures.

<sup>4</sup> The official German tax scale for Polish workers does not give figures for taxes calculated on the basis of a daily wage higher than 9.45 RM.

authorised to lower the special "Eastern" tax for "Eastern" workers who had exceptionally high qualifications or whose output exceeded the average to a considerable degree. In this way, it was officially stated, the "Eastern" worker might even earn the same wage as a comparable German.<sup>1</sup> Apart from such extraordinary exceptions, however, the "Eastern" worker continued to be subject to the "Eastern" tax (*Ostarbeiterabgabe*) which, though reduced as from 1 May 1943, was still very much higher than even the tax on the Polish workers. During this third period of wartime tax policy towards "Eastern" workers, the rates were altered to the following levels:

SPECIAL "EASTERN" TAX IN FORCE SINCE 1 MAY 1943<sup>2</sup> (IRRESPECTIVE OF MARITAL STATUS) AS COMPARED WITH SPECIAL "EASTERN TAX" BEFORE THAT DATE

(RM)

Gross wage	Special "Eastern" tax	
	after 1 May 1943	before 1 May 1943
2.40	0.20	0.40
3.00	0.50	0.80
4.00	1.05	1.50
5.00	1.65	2.25
6.00	2.40	3.00
8.00	3.90	4.45
9.10	4.70	5.25
11.00	6.30	6.85
12.00	7.10	7.65
13.00	7.90	8.25
15.00	9.50	9.85

It should be noted that the special "Eastern" tax (like the special Polish "equalisation" tax) was levied outside German territory as well. The tax tables were published in the official gazettes of the German occupation authorities.<sup>3</sup> An interesting provision was contained in an Order, issued by Terboven, Reich Commissioner for the Occupied Norwegian Territories, concerning placement conditions of "Eastern" workers in Norway. It stipulated that three quarters of the special "Eastern" tax levied in Norway on "Eastern" workers should go to Germany, and one quarter to Norway.<sup>4</sup>

At the same time the wage rates for "Eastern" workers were increased as follows:

<sup>1</sup> Order by the Commissioner-General for Manpower, of 5 April 1943; *Reichs-arbeitsblatt*, No. 11, 15 Apr. 1943, Part I, p. 234.

<sup>2</sup> *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 10 Apr. 1943, Part I, pp. 183 *et seq.*

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Verordnungsblatt des Militärbefehlshabers in Belgien und Nordfrankreich für die besetzten Gebiete Belgiens und Nordfrankreichs*, issued by the *Militärbefehlshaber (Militärverwaltungschef)*, No. 103, 16 June 1943, pp. 1328 *et seq.*

<sup>4</sup> *Verordnungsblatt für die besetzten Norwegischen Gebiete (Forordningsblad for de besatte norske områder)*, No. 9, 30 Nov. 1942, pp. 29 *et seq.*

DAILY WAGE RATES FOR "EASTERN" WORKERS BEGINNING  
1 MAY 1943  
(RM)

Comparable German workers Gross daily wage	"Eastern" workers		
	"Eastern" tax	Daily net wage	Cash payment received after deduction of tax and standard rate for food and lodging
Up to 1.40.....	—	1.60	0.10
2.40.....	0.20	2.20	0.70
3.00.....	0.50	2.50	1.00
4.00.....	1.05	3.00	1.50
5.00.....	1.65	3.30	1.80
6.00.....	2.40	3.65	2.15
8.00.....	3.90	4.15	2.65 <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For every additional 0.25 RM of the comparable German worker's wage, the amount to be paid to the "Eastern" worker increased by 0.05 RM and the "Eastern" tax by 0.20 RM.

WEEKLY WAGE RATES FOR "EASTERN" WORKERS BEGINNING  
1 MAY 1943  
(RM)

Comparable German workers Gross weekly wage	"Eastern" workers		
	"Eastern" tax	Weekly net wage	Cash payment received after deduction of tax and standard rate for food and lodging
11.90-12.60.....	—	12.95	2.45
17.50-18.20.....	1.75	15.75	5.25
28.00-29.05.....	7.35	21.00	10.50
41.65-43.05.....	16.80	25.55	15.05
68.25-70.00.....	37.10	31.85	21.35
89.25-91.00.....	53.90	36.05	25.55 <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For every additional 1.75 RM of the comparable German worker's wage, the amount to be paid to the "Eastern" worker was increased by 0.35 RM and the special tax by 1.40 RM.

The Commissioner-General for Manpower expressly admitted that, after the introduction of these "considerable improvements", a Soviet or Polish worker,

even if he does good work, might still find himself, after deductions for food and board were made, with a comparatively small amount of cash, namely, less than 40 Rpf. per day, less than 2.80 RM per week, or less than 12 RM per month. The employer is therefore authorised to decrease at his discretion the deductions for food and board in such a way that the worker is left with 40 Rpf. per day (or 2.80 RM per week or 12 RM per month) if he does good work and is of impeccable behaviour.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Order by the Commissioner-General for Manpower, of 14 April 1943; *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 12-13, 5 May 1943, Part I, p. 270; Part V, p. 211.

Later, in line with the efforts to increase the output of foreign workers, the underpayment of "Eastern" workers was somewhat mitigated, and by Order of 23 July 1943<sup>1</sup>, a system of bonuses was introduced, to encourage individual workers to improve their output. By a Decree of the War Cabinet of 25 March 1944<sup>2</sup>, the "Eastern" tax was abolished and Soviet workers were instead made subject to the 15 per cent. "social equalisation" tax of the Poles. At the same time it was stated, as a general principle, that "Eastern" workers should receive the same wages and bonuses as other foreign workers (this applied to industrial workers only).

However, one important discrimination between "Eastern" workers and Polish workers continued. The Soviet workers, like the Poles, had now to pay German wage tax (and all social insurance contributions); but, while the wage tax was graded for Polish workers according to family status<sup>3</sup>, the Decree of the War Cabinet stated expressly that all "Eastern" workers fell under tax group I (tax for single persons). A German worker (married man with two children) making 6 RM a day as gross wage, had to pay a wage tax of 0.03 RM. From the spring of 1944 a Pole had to pay 0.70 RM, and a Soviet worker, 1.07 RM. The wage tax was to be calculated before deduction of the 15 per cent. "social equalisation" tax. In addition, the Soviet worker had to pay social insurance contributions.<sup>4</sup>

The concessions made to "Eastern" workers in the spring of 1944 were publicised as a proof of German magnanimity.<sup>5</sup> It does not appear, however, that the new system was wholly to the advantage of the Soviet workers, who in some instances received even less than before, and less per month than most German workers earned per week. In June 1944, an Order by the Commissioner-General for Manpower advised employers that where the new regulations resulted in lower wages than before, they should try to remedy this either by employing the worker on some other job in the undertaking, by introducing piece work, by fixing piece rates correctly, by making the worker increase his output, or by increasing his working hours. Fritz Sauckel also issued instructions that if the "Eastern" worker received less than 67.50 RM per month under the new system his wages might be increased to that level. In in-

<sup>1</sup> *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 9 Aug. 1943, No. 73.

<sup>2</sup> Decree of 25 March 1944, signed by Reich Marshal Göring, in his capacity as Chairman of the War Cabinet, Heinrich Himmler, in his capacity as Delegate Plenipotentiary for the Administration of the Reich, and Dr. Lammers, Chief of the Reich Chancellery; *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 5 Apr. 1944, No. 14, Part I, p. 68.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 130.

<sup>4</sup> *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, 9 Apr. and 11 June 1944; *Berliner Börsen-Zeitung*, 8 May 1944.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. "Die Bewährung der Ostarbeiter", in *Die Wirtschaftskurve* (Frankfurt on Main), May 1944, pp. 307 *et seq.*

dividual instances in which the foreigner was earning less than before, but in fact earned more than 67.50 RM, the employer might continue to pay the old rates.<sup>1</sup>

In a last-minute effort to lessen the opposition of conscripted workers, it was decided that in the *Warthegau* Poles with a good output record (*Leistungs-Polen*) should be exempted from the 15 per cent. "social equalisation" tax from 1 November 1944. Poles whose achievements and conduct were satisfactory were also allowed to receive Christmas bonuses in 1944.

Finally, in early March 1945, the 15 per cent. "social equalisation" tax was abolished for Soviet workers.<sup>2</sup>

### CONCLUSIONS

As the conscripted workers had no possibility of participating in the determination of their own wages, the German authorities, which laid down the rules for the computation of these wages (except in cases in which they were fixed by bilateral Government agreements) had a choice between two methods: (a) to prescribe special wage rates for the various groups of foreigners, or (b) to apply the German wage rates. The first alternative was chosen in the case of certain categories of agricultural workers and of domestic workers<sup>3</sup>, and the second alternative in the case of industrial workers. On the other hand, deductions were made from the wages paid and these deductions were by no means uniform.

Workers from central and western Europe received the most favourable conditions but the rule of equality of treatment was not applied even to them without exceptions. For instance, German workers received certain bonuses which the foreign workers did not receive.

Moreover, it must be borne in mind that the rules relating to job classification and to piece rates might be applied in a very discriminatory way and there is reason to think that that was in fact done. Thus, unless the foreign worker was given the type of work which would make the fullest use of his skill, he would not in fact be receiving the same wage as a German worker with similar skill. In addition, piece rates made the wage system more elastic but did not necessarily lead to higher earnings, and different piece

<sup>1</sup> *Völkischer Beobachter*, 23 June 1944. In the summer of 1944, efficiency bonuses were introduced for Polish and Soviet agricultural workers. German employers were urged to exploit the possibilities of the new scheme as an inducement to greater output, particularly during the grain and root crop harvest (*Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 25 July 1944).

<sup>2</sup> *Nachrichten- und Pressedienst* (news agency of the German Foreign Office), 7 Mar. 1945.

<sup>3</sup> See Chapter XIII.

rates might be applied to different groups of workers for political reasons. When lower piece rates were applied to groups of foreign workers, that also involved discrimination.

On the other hand, the general rule that workers whose output was considered inadequate were to receive less than the normal rate opened the door to arbitrary treatment and necessarily caused hardship to the individuals concerned.

Various deductions were made from wages and they were operated in such a way as to discriminate against certain categories of foreign workers. The central and western European workers, for example, paid the same taxes as German workers, but Polish, and especially Soviet, workers paid taxes which were much higher. In this way the net earnings of the workers from the East were considerably below those of the others.

It is not possible to present a complete picture of the net earnings of the various categories of foreign workers at the different periods of their employment but certain general facts stand out. The earnings of the majority of the workers, namely, those from the East, were so low that a large percentage of them were hardly in a position to do more than pay the standard rate for mass shelter and board and to purchase the barest necessities. Consequently, they were unable to contribute to any appreciable extent to the support of their families. As the war went more and more against Germany certain concessions were made to these workers, but by that time their home countries had been liberated from German occupation and consequently no savings could be transferred to their families.

There are three other factors which must be taken into account. First, all foreign workers had to pay the German social insurance contributions, which were very considerable, and for which they did not receive the same benefits and services as the Germans.<sup>1</sup> Secondly, the foreign workers in the higher wage brackets were under strong pressure to earmark part of their earnings for the benefit of their dependants at home, and the exchange value of these savings declined steadily in purchasing power in the home countries owing to the fact that the exchange rates, which were fixed by the German authorities, generally speaking remained stable despite inflation in those countries. Finally, it may be pointed out that even with the same net earnings the foreign workers would have been unable to purchase the same quantity of goods as the German workers. The German population was helped in a variety of ways by closely centralised and controlled Government, community and Party welfare organisations, but the foreigner, far away from

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<sup>1</sup> See Chapter XIV.



home, without any official connections, very often without ration cards, had to rely on the black market to a larger extent than the average German. It is not possible to give a statistical estimate of the extent to which the actual purchasing power of the foreign workers in Germany was affected by the fact that they were often unable to purchase goods at the official prices, but there is no doubt that it was appreciably less than that of Germans with the same nominal earnings and that it decreased progressively as the German supply situation deteriorated.

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Until the records can be examined, it will be impossible to ascertain the amounts which were collected by the German Government from foreign workers by way of wartime taxation. Some estimate can nevertheless be made. From Soviet workers alone, whose tax payments were by far the highest, tax receipts must have reached some thousand million RM. At a conservative estimate, 2 million Soviet workers, paying an average of 15 RM tax a week, would have contributed to the German Treasury 1,500 million RM in one year. On the assumption that  $1\frac{1}{4}$  million Poles paid on the average only 5 RM per week (15 per cent. special "social equalisation" tax, plus wage tax), the yield would have been more than 300 million RM a year. On this cautious estimate, the Reich Treasury received nearly two thousand million RM a year, for two or three years, from the workers from the East alone. To these amounts must be added the taxes paid by foreign workers of other nationalities. In their cases, the tax rates were very considerably lower; but a greater number of them, especially of the workers from the west and north-west of the continent, belonged to the higher income groups. Their taxes must therefore have added very substantially to those extracted from the Polish and Soviet workers.

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## CHAPTER XI

### CONDITIONS OF WORK

The conditions under which foreign workers had to work in Germany were well summarised by the Commissioner-General for Manpower. "The political, moral and economic principles of the German system of labour administration", Fritz Sauckel stated, "are dictated by the laws of war, by German justice, and by National Socialist conscience".<sup>1</sup> Similarly, in a message to the German people of 24 February 1943, Adolf Hitler declared: "We shall consider it a matter of course not to husband foreign lives at a time that is exacting so heavy a sacrifice of life from ourselves".

National Socialist terminology was characteristically consistent in using the term *Einsatz* to describe the wartime use of available manpower. This is a military expression and was formerly used to denote the despatch of troops to localities where they were needed for tactical or strategic purposes. "Naturally, labour *Einsatz* takes place not on a voluntary basis, but on a basis of duty."<sup>2</sup> The term well defines the use of manpower for the German war effort.

All the conditions under which recruited workers had to work for Germany were coloured by the compulsory nature of their employment. The compulsion was rendered more severe, and the less easy to endure, by the fact that most labour recruits, except that small minority which had gone to Germany on a genuinely voluntary basis, were in the extremely painful position of being forced to work for the war effort of the enemy against whom their own countries and their own friends continued to fight. Present-day industrial psychology rightly stresses the large part that morale plays, not only in the worker's output, but also in his general well-being. The protracted and acute psychological strain under which the very great majority of the labour recruits had to work must always be borne in mind in attempting to form an idea of their actual working conditions.

Other factors that must also be remembered were the effects of constant supervision by the German police, language difficulties,

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<sup>1</sup> *Arbeitseinsatz und Arbeitslosenhilfe*, Jan. 1943, p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> *Deutsche Zeitung im Osten*, 20 May 1942.

unfavourable living conditions and, very often, insufficient diet. The cumulative effect of these circumstances was bound to create among foreign labour recruits a tendency to develop the symptoms of over-fatigue much more quickly than in normal circumstances. Official German sources, of course, referred to these circumstances only by implication, mainly in the course of prolonged discussion of methods by which the output of foreigners could be increased.

#### HOURS OF WORK, OVERTIME PAY, EFFORTS TO INCREASE OUTPUT

In the years preceding the outbreak of military hostilities, the German Government's determination to develop its armament and fortification programme with all possible speed induced it to increase the working day of various categories of workers and to suspend the regulations concerning overtime pay. On the day on which Germany opened its campaign against Poland, all laws and regulations limiting the duration of the working day and working week, and prescribing overtime pay, were swept away by a single Order.<sup>1</sup> Employers were given the right to determine the hours of work of their employees, on the understanding that during the war they would normally be 60 per week. Instead of paying allowances for overtime work (*i.e.*, for working time exceeding 48 hours), employers were ordered to remit the equivalent amounts to the Reich Treasury.

This rule created so much discontent among German workers that by Order of 12 December 1939<sup>2</sup> "suitable overtime pay", normally 25 per cent., for work in excess of 10 (or 12) hours per day was permitted, unless a different arrangement was prescribed by the Reich Minister of Labour.

The regular 6-day working week continued to be 60 hours. Overtime pay began for work done after 10 hours in the day. If working time regularly and considerably included periods of mere presence, overtime additions for male workers over 18 years of age were to start only after the 12th hour. The overtime allowances accruing from work between the 8th and 10th (or 12th) hour had still to be remitted to the Reich Treasury. At the same time, the discretionary powers granted to employers by the Order of 1 September 1939 were curtailed. The employer was, however, still entitled to ask for unlimited overtime work, without extra pay, "if temporary work had to be carried out at once in an emergency",

<sup>1</sup> Order of 1 September 1939; *Reichsgesetzblatt*, Part I, p. 1683; INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE: *Legislative Series*, 1939, Ger. 6.

<sup>2</sup> *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 13 Dec. 1939, No. 247, Part I, p. 2403; INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE: *Legislative Series*, 1940, Ger. 1 B.

provided he immediately notified the industrial inspection office when any such work was undertaken.

Nine months later, on 8 September 1940<sup>1</sup>, the right of the workers to receive overtime pay for work beyond 48 hours a week was reintroduced. The standard wartime working week remained at 60 hours which, however, was not a maximum.<sup>2</sup>

As a matter of principle, foreign workers were employed in war-essential activities where working time was longest. In fact, in the armament industries the 60-hour week was actually the minimum rather than the maximum.

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The longer the war lasted, the closer grew the connection between hours of work and productivity per man-hour.

In the particular case of foreign workers even the longest working hours did not help if the cumulative effects of the unfavourable conditions already mentioned, combined with their own deliberate slow-down techniques, lowered the output per man-hour too greatly.<sup>3</sup> In his address at the first Congress of the Labour Administration of Greater Germany in September 1942, the Commissioner-General for Manpower pointed out that "the German worker is being treated in a hard, honourable and strict manner. It goes without saying that these principles are also applied to workers of foreign nationality." The most urgent task of the agency dealing with the administration of foreign manpower, he maintained—as he did often before and after—must be to increase the intensity of work of every individual foreigner: "it can no

<sup>1</sup> Order of 3 September 1940; *Reichsgesetzblatt*, Part I, p. 1205.

<sup>2</sup> For women and young persons of both sexes under 18, the maximum working week was fixed at 56 hours. It could be extended with the permission of the labour trustees. Until 1943, night work for German women was forbidden (except for women in managerial positions) unless with the permission of the labour trustees. The German Labour Front considered that "night shifts for [German] women should be introduced only when the last foreign worker is employed on night shifts and when the last man is taken out of non-essential production" (cf. *Deutsche Bergwerks-Zeitung*, 25 Mar. 1943). Another reason advanced for the employment of foreigners, especially those from the East, at night, was that supervision was easier if they were kept in their huts during the day.

<sup>3</sup> Although the labour recruits' deliberate efforts to slow down their work were generally known to all concerned, public references to them were rare. It was an exception when the *Essener National-Zeitung*, on 13 February 1944, complained bitterly of "notorious sluggards and saboteurs". It described "a group of Eastern workers removing rubble from a burnt-out cinema theatre... The load is what a child of 6 years could manage without strain. Compared with this... a snail's pace is a gallop... But in one corner two men are working hard trying to keep up a fire to warm themselves. It is a real pleasure to see the muscular strength they exert in chopping firewood. This is only one example of many similar scenes witnessed daily... We feed them in such a way that they are well able to do their work and they also have to thank us for saving them from bolshevism. Many of them would probably have been killed long ago in battle if the Bolshevik recruiters had got hold of them."

longer be tolerated that in the occupied territories even half a dozen foreign workers do not produce as much as one German worker in Germany".<sup>1</sup> Even in the summer of 1944, in the course of the last general tightening of manpower regulations, he declared that the time must be definitely over when German employers could get two or three foreigners for every German released for military duty.

In their efforts to remove the many causes of reduced productivity by foreign workers, the German authorities used a variety of methods, ranging from threats of coercion, to promises of special privileges and the introduction of considerable changes in technological processes. It is a far cry from threatening a foreigner whose output is unsatisfactory, on the ground that he is guilty of sabotage, with the concentration camp or even the death penalty, to depicting to him the advantages of promotion, and to promising him that he could expect better treatment for better work. Yet it has been characteristic of the German wartime system to use these contradictory methods at different places and times for different groups and individuals, in line with the policy of graded discrimination (which, in reverse, was also a policy of graded favours); and, indeed, methods of persuasion, of inducement and of coercion were often applied simultaneously. One of the inducements offered to foreigners in the attempt to improve their productivity was the promise of home leave, which is discussed in detail below.

A high official, *Gau-Obmann* H. Bangert, reported<sup>2</sup> that favourable results had been obtained by awarding a badge to workers from the East who reached the highest efficiency class (*Leistungsklasse*). The holder of the badge was exempt from such duties as fetching food and cleaning rooms in the camps. He distributed the incoming mail. He was made spokesman for the group and had to be saluted by the other inmates of the camp. In short, he was to be considered as "partially a superior" in the eyes of his fellow workers. The badge, and with it the privileges, were at once taken away if output ceased to increase or stagnated, if his own behaviour deteriorated, or if he did not collaborate by exerting his authority over the members of his group.<sup>3</sup> Among the various non-monetary rewards promised to individual foreign

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in *Arbeitseinsatz und Arbeitslosenhilfe*, Oct.-Nov. 1942, p. 45.

<sup>2</sup> H. BANGERT: "How to Make the Fullest Use of the Work Potentialities of Foreign Workers", in *Deutsche Bergwerks-Zeitung*, 9 Mar. 1943.

<sup>3</sup> In December 1942 Gauleiter Greiser of the incorporated *Warthegau*, in a speech to factory workers in Poznan, announced the formation of "an association of working Poles"; membership in this association was to be open to Poles who collaborated with the Germans and achieved good output. They and their families were to receive German food rations and wages equivalent to the German rates (*Deutsches Nachrichten Bureau*, 20 Dec. 1942).

workers for improved output was a "performance badge". This badge, consisting of a sword crossed with a hammer, was introduced for special achievements in the spring of 1944. A stripe was added if the bearer was a former *légionnaire* who had seen military action against the Soviet Union but had been returned to factory work owing to injury or illness<sup>1</sup>. It is to be noted that the bestowal of these badges and similar inducements were started only at a late stage of the war, when the German authorities were making every effort to increase output, at least from a minority of collaborators.

A much more important device increasingly introduced after the number of foreign workers had reached large-scale proportions was the deliberate encouragement of payment at piece-work rates instead of hourly rates. According to German sources, it was estimated that, between 1933 and 1943, the Reich Committee for the Study of Work Methods (*Reichsausschuss für Arbeitsstudien*, abbreviated *Refa*), in close collaboration with the German Labour Front, trained no fewer than 50,000 time-study experts.<sup>2</sup> The findings of these experts (or, as they were called in Germany, "Refa men") were made the basis for the official piece-rate schedules. According to German sources, the introduction of piece-work rates proved effective, especially with women and younger men, but it was less successful with the more mature and the older men.

Great efforts were also made to break up difficult manipulations (which needed skilled labour)<sup>3</sup> into a large number of simpler

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<sup>1</sup> *Westfälische Neueste Nachrichten* (Bielefeld), 9 May 1944.

<sup>2</sup> H. L. ANSBACHER: "German Industrial Psychology in the Fifth Year of War", in *Psychological Bulletin*, Nov. 1944, p. 609.

<sup>3</sup> Wherever possible, skilled foreigners were employed in their particular field. For example, it was the German policy to move railway personnel of occupied countries, together with the requisitioned railway equipment, from the occupied countries to Germany. Ukrainian miners were shifted to the mines of the Ruhr region (*Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 12 Feb. 1942), of Silesia (*Die Zeitung* (London), 12 Aug. 1943) and of Austria (*Völkischer Beobachter*, 21 Jan. 1943), where miners from the Rostov area were reported to be working in the mines near Leoben. Gardeners from the Netherlands and Bulgaria were employed on vegetable farms in various parts of Germany, and Italian and French waiters and cooks in many German restaurants and hotels. However, the majority of the deported workers were either not skilled in the occupations for which they were needed in Germany or they had to relinquish their own occupations in order to perform functions considered more essential for the German war effort. It was urged, for example, that "if a foundry is in urgent need of workers and if a neighbouring textile factory happens to have in their employ foreign workers fit to do that type of heavy work, it may be necessary to transfer them to the foundry" (Dr. Herbert HILDEBRANDT and Dr. Walter RUDIG: *Die Mobilisierung von Arbeitsreserven* (Munich and Berlin, 1943)). A Vienna paper reported that among Czechs newly arrived in the summer of 1943 to work in mechanical and optical enterprises, 16.5 per cent. were former officials and 15.7 per cent. commercial employees (*Südost Echo*, July 1943). When *La Vie économique* in August 1943 stated that about 240,000 French commercial employees aged 24 to 50 were working at various jobs in German factories, there can be no doubt that these "various jobs" included many activities unconnected with their normal occupations.

manipulations in order to permit wider utilisation of unskilled labour and greater standardisation of production.<sup>1</sup> These more standardised performances were, in turn, easier to remunerate on a piece-rate basis.

Frequent complaints by employers of the unsatisfactory output of foreigners and, especially of those from the East, were met by the German authorities with the criticism that, as Fritz Sauckel put it in an Order of 23 October 1942<sup>2</sup>,

many plants have not even tried seriously to examine the potentialities of individual foreigners. Since there is such a variety of jobs to be done in large undertakings, it should be possible after a test to find the right job for the right person. A rough sorting out (*Grobsortierung*)<sup>3</sup> on the basis of common sense is not sufficient, since most of the foreigners do not possess any school certificates or work certificates when they come to Germany. Furthermore, many Eastern workers showed a marked preference for agricultural work, and this inclination considerably influenced their answers when they were subjected to a simple interrogation.<sup>4</sup>

The introduction of scientific tests was strongly encouraged. The German Labour Front set up special training courses in which examiners were trained for testing. The greatest amount of research in the field of psychological testing of imported workers was done by the Institute of Labour Psychology and Labour Pedagogics of the German Labour Front. Employers were invited to keep in close contact with the Institute. They were also constantly advised systematically to exchange their experiences with testing methods and technological changes introduced to increase the output of foreign workers.<sup>5</sup> Another method advocated to increase output<sup>6</sup> was to group labour recruits, and particularly those from the East, into work gangs. The gang was to be led by an able and intelligent worker (*Akkordführer*) of the same nationality. In proportion to

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<sup>1</sup> *Die Wirtschaftskurve*, July 1943 (*Frankfurter Zeitung*).

<sup>2</sup> *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 25 Nov. 1942, Part I, p. 516.

<sup>3</sup> Such terms as *Grobsortierung*, which were used officially in connection with labour deportees, were, in pre-National Socialist Germany, never used with reference to persons, but only to commodities and cattle.

<sup>4</sup> For a contrary trend among foreigners, see Ch. XV. The Commissioner-General probably referred to cases in which labour recruits tried to be sent to farms because they expected to receive better food there, or endeavoured to conceal their industrial skill.

<sup>5</sup> The Reich Minister of Armament and Munitions published a magazine entitled "Exchange of Experiences" (*Der Erfahrungsaustausch*) for the exclusive purpose of enabling German war industries to exchange information on production methods and experience in technical and labour problems. The magazine circulated only among the managerial staffs of the German armament industry (*Deutsche Bergwerks-Zeitung*, 26 Apr. 1944).

It was also found necessary to appoint special efficiency experts with authority to carry out technological improvements and changes in the assignments of workers (see p. 67).

<sup>6</sup> E.g., BANGERT, in *Deutsche Bergwerks-Zeitung*, 9 Mar. 1943.

their efficiency, the members of the gang were granted special wages, special rest periods during the working day, and some additional food and tobacco. (No wage increase was, of course, permissible without the previous consent of the head of the labour office.) If output declined the privileges were to be discontinued.



Careful examination of German sources would reveal that the continuous and systematic efforts to increase the output of foreign labour recruits, through a combination of compulsion, rewards, training and changes in production techniques, did achieve some success, but that the results obtained were definitely limited by the continued opposition of a great majority of the labour recruits, by their exhaustion and fatigue<sup>1</sup>, and by the need of concealing the secrets of the German armament production and fortification programme<sup>2</sup>, and of preventing too close a collaboration between foreigners and German workers, for fear of fraternisation. The decreasing trend in the productivity per man-hour of both non-German and German workers continued throughout the war. In face of these difficulties, the German authorities always fell back on two methods: first, on following the formula of the Commissioner-General for Manpower, that the remuneration and food of the foreign worker must be in proportion to his output and goodwill<sup>3</sup>; and secondly, on prescribing long working hours.<sup>4</sup>

In the late spring of 1943, the *Münchner Neueste Nachrichten* reported that at a model estate near Munich, the working day of Ukrainian women aged 17 to 45 was 11 hours, after which they had to do their own cleaning and cooking.<sup>5</sup> The Polish "underground" paper, *Wies i Miasto*, stated that 8,000 young Poles conscripted into the building service, who were working on the railway near Cracow, had to work 12 hours on weekdays and 8 on Sundays. According to a German-controlled Dutch paper<sup>6</sup>, the working hours of Belgians billeted in huts were usually longer than the hours of those allowed to live in private quarters; on the ground that they

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<sup>1</sup> The *Westfälische Landeszeitung Rote Erde*, 17 Aug. 1943, stated: "It is intended to arrange the life of the Eastern workers in such a way as to preserve their capacity to work for the Reich for a considerable time".

<sup>2</sup> Cf. BIRKENHOLZ, in *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 83.

<sup>3</sup> Address at First Congress of Labour Administration of Greater Germany, 10-11 Sept. 1942; *Arbeitseinsatz und Arbeitslosenhilfe*, Oct.-Nov. 1942, p. 45.

<sup>4</sup> Some important groups in the German labour administration were critical of this policy (see p. 95 and *International Labour Review*, Vol. XLVIII, No. 2, Aug. 1943, p. 242), but their views did not prevail.

<sup>5</sup> Quoted in *Der Landbote* (Winterthur, Switzerland), 2 June 1943.

<sup>6</sup> *Nieuwe Rotterdamse Courant*, 19 July 1943.



did not lose much time in travelling to and from work they usually had to work 72 hours a week. In May 1944, Wagner, Regional Chief of East Prussia, in his annual report to the Regional Labour Chamber in Königsberg, stated that "men who are often obliged to work 72 hours a week, including Sundays and holidays, do so willingly".<sup>1</sup>

One of the longest working weeks was reported from the Todt Organisation in Trondenes, Norway: 76 hours, with one Sunday off every 3 weeks. At the end of August 1944, Joseph Goebbels, in his capacity as Commissioner-General for Total War Effort, extended the uniform 60-hour week to public and private office work and added: "Those sectors where considerably longer hours are being worked in any case in order to deal with contracts essential for the war will remain unaffected by this measure".<sup>2</sup>

Towards the end of 1944, the *Essener National-Zeitung* published a report entitled "Increase of Output through Concentrated Food"<sup>3</sup> which dealt with the effects of over-fatigue and efforts to overcome them, among both German and non-German workers. According to this report, the 60-hour working week had long since been a matter of course in the essential war factories, and a large number of workers had been working 70 hours and more. The article recognised that the demands made upon the workers were particularly heavy in the very numerous war factories where the production process did not permit of interruption and asked for the highest degree of continuous alertness on the part of the workers; an even greater effort was exacted from workers in underground factories, with their lack of daylight and fresh air. In order to counteract these detrimental conditions, it continued, stimulants had been widely used. They consisted chiefly of cola and synthetic caffeine mixed with chocolate. But "the newest method consists of mixing caffeine and cola with alcohol; this liquor has proved extraordinarily valuable in the achievement of very high output".

### HOME FURLONGHS

When large-scale importation of foreigners began, the German authorities promised that the workers would be sent home on vacation, usually after either six or twelve months of work in Germany. The grant of a vacation was to depend, it is true, on fulfilment of the worker's obligations, a condition which, on the one

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<sup>1</sup> *Aftonbladet* (Stockholm), Jan. 1944.

<sup>2</sup> Art. 5 of Goebbels' Order of 24 August 1944; *Deutsches Nachrichten Bureau*, 24 Aug. 1944.

<sup>3</sup> "Leistungssteigerung durch Intensivnahrung", in *Essener National-Zeitung*, 11 Nov. 1944.

hand, was designed to decrease the opposition of the foreigners, and on the other hand, opened the door to all kinds of individual and group discriminations.

At first, the general regulations concerning family furloughs for foreign workers employed in Germany during the war periods<sup>1</sup> promised periodical holidays even to Polish workers, if their work proved satisfactory. An administrative regulation having the force of a collective agreement (*Tarifordnung*), of 27 August 1941, provided that married workers should receive home leave after every six months of uninterrupted employment in Germany, and unmarried, widowed and divorced workers, as well as Poles, after twelve months.

A Decree by the Reich Minister of Labour, of 4 March 1941, set out the following reasons for a foreigner's temporary return to his country:

- (1) family furlough;
- (2) home furlough;
- (3) furlough for special family reasons and other emergencies (death, etc.);
- (4) short leaves, for example, for the purpose of collecting winter clothes for his fellow-workers;
- (5) sick leave.

Regular family and home leave was to last seven days if the distance the worker had to travel to reach his family was less than 500 kilometres, and eight, nine or ten days if the distance was from 500 to 750, from 750 to 1,000, or more than 1,000 kilometres, respectively.<sup>2</sup>

The first difficulties were caused by the great number, the complicated nature and the frequent changes of the formalities which the foreigner had to go through in order to leave his employment and cross the frontier. They differed for each nationality and even for various groups of the same nationality.

No foreigner was allowed to enter or to leave Reich territory without a German visa issued by the German police. But the police granted a visa only if the worker had procured a "return certificate" issued by the employer and countersigned and sealed by the labour office. The Reich Minister of Labour emphasised, for example<sup>3</sup>, that the labour offices must in no circumstances

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<sup>1</sup> *Tarifordnung zur Regelung von Familienheimfahrten während der Kriegszeit für ausländische Arbeitskräfte im Deutschen Reich*, of 27 August 1940; *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, Part IV, p. 1239.

<sup>2</sup> BIRKENHOLZ, in *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 446.

<sup>3</sup> Order of 6 February 1942; *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 190, amendment of 20 July 1942.

countersign a furlough certificate which did not contain full details about the train by which the worker was to travel.

In addition, various countries issued complicated restrictive regulations concerning the crossing of their frontiers; and it was extremely difficult for workers, under the restrictions imposed upon them in Germany, to provide themselves with the various travel documents necessary. In many cases<sup>1</sup> the foreigners were not able to comply with all these regulations before the departure of their trains and it was officially recognised that this resulted "in unnecessary additional strain on the railways and in avoidable resentment from the workers, if they had to be sent back from the German frontier because they were not provided with one or the other required certificate". There were frequent official German complaints of the great number of workers, many of them sick or disabled, who were stranded at the frontier without the necessary papers or visa.<sup>2</sup>

The difficulties were further increased by the great strain on transportation facilities. The fact that some categories of home-bound foreigners were entitled to free transportation proved another complication, because it raised the question of who had to pay the expenses. In addition, many categories of workers, among them practically all those from the East, and certain Balkan areas, were not allowed to travel individually, but had to await mass transports. A small part of the cost of running special furlough trains was borne by the labour offices, and the larger part by the employers. Workers from western and northern Europe were allowed to travel individually, but many of them were not able to pay for their tickets. This led to complicated negotiations between the labour offices, the employers, the German military occupation authorities and the foreign authorities. If, as was the practice in many cases, the money for the ticket was advanced by the employer, arrangements were needed to ensure that the worker did not overstay his furlough and returned to his place of employment.

Similar problems arose if, as also happened frequently, the foreigner was not able to pay for his return ticket. For example, many French workers on their way back to Germany were stranded in Paris. If the German Military Commander of Greater Paris paid their travelling expenses from Paris to the Franco-German frontier (the expenses from the frontier to the place of employment in Germany would be paid or advanced by the labour offices) he demanded that the labour offices should require the foreigner to

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 25 May 1942, No. 15, Part I, p. 258.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Order by the Commissioner-General for Manpower, of 16 April 1943; *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 5-15 May 1943, Part I, p. 262.

pay back the money.<sup>1</sup> Many complications also arose from the changed political conditions of the continent of Europe. German employers, for example, when asked to provide French workers with tickets to the Franco-German frontier, would give them tickets only to Strasbourg, whereas the German authorities in Alsace considered the route from the eastern to the western frontier of Alsace as part of the German route. French workers thus arrived in Strasbourg without sufficient funds<sup>2</sup> to purchase tickets onwards to the western frontier of Alsace and this resulted "in annoying interruptions in travel and resentment among the travellers".<sup>3</sup>

Sick or pregnant workers had to undergo examination at the local insurance office. After this examination, the office had to make an entry on the furlough certificate, indicating whether or not it consented to the foreigner's return to Germany.

Since the great majority of workers on leave had to use special trains for their ultimate return to Germany, serious delay was often caused by the fact that no special trains were available. To remedy this situation, the Commissioner-General for Manpower asked, for example, the Italian sub-branch of the German Labour Administration to examine all furlough certificates at the German (Austrian)-Italian frontier. If, at the end of the furlough period, no special workers' trains running from Italy to Germany happened to be scheduled, the labour administration representatives were authorised to lengthen or shorten the furlough period so as to make its termination coincide with the departure of a workers' train from Italy to Germany.<sup>4</sup> During the early stages of the war, German-employed Italians could return to Italy for leave only by special mass transportation which was organised at intervals jointly by the German and Italian authorities. By Orders of the Reich Minister of Labour of 24 September 1941 and 6 February 1942, the labour offices were empowered to authorise Italian industrial workers only (not agricultural workers) to travel individually, if the worker established to their satisfaction that such permission was desirable because of very exceptional circumstances, and if the urgency of the journey was confirmed either by an Italian authority or by the provincial office of the Italian Workers' Corporation.

On 13 October 1942, Fritz Sauckel changed these regulations "in order to limit even further the use of regular trains by Italian

<sup>1</sup> Order by the Commissioner-General for Manpower, of 14 January 1943; *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 5 Feb. 1943, Part I, p. 89.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 180 for the regulations prohibiting exportation of money.

<sup>3</sup> Order by the Commissioner-General for Manpower, of 16 April 1943; *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 5-15 May 1943, No. 12-13, Part I, p. 262.

<sup>4</sup> Order by the Commissioner-General for Manpower of 30 October 1942; *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 120 (2), supplement, 5 Nov. 1942.

workers". From 1 January 1943, the German labour offices were instructed to allow Italians the use of regular trains only if the extraordinary urgency of the furlough was confirmed by the Delegation of the Fascist Confederation of Industrial Labour in Germany. But even when travelling by mass transportation, Italians, like all other foreigners, had to produce exit visas from the German police and furlough certificates issued by their employers and countersigned by the German Labour Office.

Under the regulations in force after November 1942, Italian workers' furlough certificates had to contain no fewer than the following data: place, day and hour of departure of the train to be taken to travel to and from Italy; statement whether the worker was sent home for family furlough, home furlough, sickness or accident furlough, or furlough for special circumstances; details concerning the return ticket with which the worker had been supplied; name of the sickness insurance fund with which he was insured in Germany. As basis and evidence for penal action in Germany and/or Italy, the certificate also contained clauses to the effect that the worker had been informed about the regulations on the exportation of German or Italian currency from Germany, and that he was bound to return to the same German undertaking on expiration of the furlough.

The main and most important reason, however, for the refusal of the authorities of the Third Reich to grant vacations to foreign workers, even when regular and periodical vacations with pay had been expressly promised in Government agreements or individual or collective contracts, was unwillingness to lose the worker. Throughout the war Germany failed to keep its promises of home furloughs to the recruited labour force. Yet the longer the war lasted and the more disquieting even the censored news became about privations and misery in their home countries, the more urgent grew the desire of the deportees to go home, at least for a few days, and see for themselves. Others hoped while in their own country that they would somehow manage to "desert".

Up to the summer of 1944, when Goebbels, in his capacity as plenipotentiary for the Total War Effort, ordered "a universal temporary ban on holidays, with immediate effect"<sup>1</sup>, the Germans avoided announcing a wholesale and uniform stoppage of all home furloughs. Instead, as can be seen from the maze of regulations on

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<sup>1</sup> Order of 24 August 1944, applicable to all persons, including Germans, except German women who, before 31 December 1944, would complete their 50th year, and German men who, before that date, would complete their 65th year; *Deutsches Nachrichten Bureau*, 24 Aug. 1944.

the subject, fresh hopes of home furloughs were repeatedly encouraged, except, of course for Soviet workers, who were always excluded from the privilege, and for Poles, whose furlough privileges, after some wavering at the beginning, were, to all intents and purposes, abolished long before Germany's military retreat hampered or prevented the granting of them.

But ever since 1942, the granting of furloughs, under whatever name and for whatever purpose, became more and more rare and was made dependent on an increasing number of conditions. In particular, various systems of keeping "furlough hostages" were introduced, which led to the curtailment of furlough, or to more drastic punishment, of the "hostage" if the fellow-worker failed to return from his furlough.

For example, the German-dominated Paris Radio reported on 25 October 1943 that home furloughs for Frenchmen had been resumed. Upon their arrival at the clearing camp at Châlons-sur-Marne, the labour offices and the mayors of their home towns were notified, in order to control their return to the camp at the end of the furlough period. If they failed to return in time, the mayors were again notified; the extent of the reprisals against the "deserter", his family and friends depended upon the degree to which the particular mayor collaborated with the Germans. In any case, for every Frenchman who failed to return from furlough, the furlough of another French worker in Germany was cancelled.

On the situation of Belgians, Léonce Pater wrote in *L'Avenir* of 2 March 1944: "Some workers fail to return after their furloughs. Hence a system of guarantors has been established, under which the worker may go on leave only if he has found a fellow-worker willing to stand surety for him." The article adds that, nevertheless, "too many failed to return and forgot their fellow-worker in Germany".

When Pierre Laval and Fritz Sauckel made a new agreement early in 1944 for the transfer of 300,000 additional French workers to Germany, the first 57,000 scheduled to go during the month of February 1944 were to replace approximately 57,000 French "volunteers" who, while on leave in France, had "deserted" and not returned to Germany.<sup>1</sup>

### *Furloughs for Polish Workers*

Discrimination against recruited Poles in the granting of furloughs is evident in the official German regulations on the subject. At the beginning of the war, industrial Polish workers were,

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<sup>1</sup> The quotas for Mar., Apr. and May 1944 were 81,000 French workers each.

legally at least, entitled to periodical vacations. The wage tariff regulations of 8 January 1940 provided that Polish agricultural workers were not entitled to vacations. In the preparatory stage of the Russian campaign, an Order of 31 March 1941 "concerning vacations for male and female civilian workers of Polish nationality working in Germany"<sup>1</sup>, provided that "in so far as Polish industrial workers had been entitled to vacations" such claims should be suspended "until further notice", owing to transportation difficulties. But Polish industrial workers recruited for work in Poland itself continued to be entitled to vacations, because, in these cases, transportation difficulties did not arise. However, in order "to end discrimination", the Labour Department of the Reich Governor decided<sup>2</sup> that "the regulation concerning holidays shall not apply to Polish workers until the end of the war" (except in Danzig, West Prussia and Upper Silesia). After the beginning of the Russian campaign various other regulations were made for other parts of the former Polish Republic. In 1942, the general working conditions of Poles became even worse, because many German regulations which aimed mainly at deported Soviet citizens did not except Poles, but applied to all occupied territories "in the East".

On 29 September 1942, a new Order was issued concerning vacations for Polish civilians working in Germany. As a general rule, it laid down that the right of Polish industrial workers to vacations with pay or to home furlough was "suspended", while Polish agricultural workers had never possessed any such right.

But although Poles cannot in principle be granted any *right* to be exempted from work for recreational purposes in the midst of war, it will nevertheless be appropriate, in the interest of undisturbed production, to open a *possibility* for *trustworthy* Polish workers to return for limited periods to their homes. This is to counteract the Poles' frequent absences from work, which are said to be due predominantly to the fact that they are not granted vacations; this will primarily be an incentive to those Polish workers whose output is not satisfactory, to make themselves eligible for vacation through specially good behaviour and better work.<sup>3</sup>

Fritz Sauckel therefore introduced the following rules for the granting of furloughs to Poles as special rewards (in agreement with the Party Chancellery, the Reich leader of the S.S. and Chief of the German Police, the Reich Minister of Transportation and the Minister for Food and Agriculture):

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<sup>1</sup> *Deutscher Reichsanzeiger*, No. 81; *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 1941, Part I, p. 195.

<sup>2</sup> First Supplementary Order concerning the labour law for Polish workers in the Warthegau; *Amliche Mitteilungen*, p. 44.

<sup>3</sup> *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, Part I, p. 431 (italics added).

In every individual case the consent of the local labour office had to be sought. Consent was to be given only:

- (a) if the work and the behaviour of the Pole had been fully satisfactory;
- (b) if it could be reasonably expected that he would duly return to his employment after the termination of his furlough; and
- (c) if he had been absent from his home more than 12 months.

If the vacation was granted, the employer had to keep back two weeks' wages (for agricultural workers, one month's wages) until the worker duly returned from his vacation.

It was intended<sup>1</sup> that during the second half of November 1942 "trustworthy Polish industrial workers" should be sent to the Government-General at the rate of one special train a day and that, after the winter, the schedule should be revised. However, by an Order of 18 February 1943<sup>2</sup>, the programme was temporarily postponed and a few weeks later, the Commissioner-General for Manpower stated that this system resulted in inequalities among Polish workers and therefore ordered that from 2 April 1943 their claims for vacations or family furloughs were "suspended", whether they were working in Germany proper or elsewhere.<sup>3</sup> In special cases, individual Polish workers might be granted furlough with the consent of the labour offices. Exceptions to this rule could be granted only by the Commissioner-General for Manpower himself. But the latter ordered, in a Decree of 14 May 1943<sup>4</sup>, that no vacations were to be granted to Poles until 1 December 1943.

A Decree concerning the working conditions of Poles employed in the *Warthegau*, issued as early as 15 February 1942, stipulated, with retroactive validity from 15 December 1941, that "provisions concerning furloughs do not apply to Poles until the end of the war".<sup>5</sup>

### *Holidays*

Theoretically, certain categories of foreign workers were entitled to periodical holidays, even though they were not able to visit their families at home. In 1944 this privilege was extended to "Eastern" workers; after uninterrupted employment for 12 months they were granted the same holidays as German workers, to be taken within the following 12 months. "Eastern" workers were informed that special rest camps would be opened

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<sup>1</sup> Order by the Commissioner-General for Manpower to the regional labour offices and local labour offices, of 13 October 1942; *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 30, 25 Oct. 1942, Part I, p. 459.

<sup>2</sup> *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, Part I, p. 167.

<sup>3</sup> Order of 24 March 1943; cf. *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 15 Apr. 1943, Part V, p. 188.

<sup>4</sup> *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 25 May 1943, No. 15, Part I, p. 306.

<sup>5</sup> *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 709 (1), supplement, 10 Aug. 1942.



for this purpose, but that, since this would take some time, they would in the meantime have to spend their rest periods at their own labour camps, where recreation rooms would be put at their disposal.<sup>1</sup> German broadcasts in the Dutch language reported in December 1944 that the first rest homes for French, Netherlands and Belgian workers in the Reich had been opened "in a lovely part of the province of Brandenburg". All this was, of course, academic, since Reich Minister Joseph Goebbels in the summer of 1944 had suspended the taking or granting of holidays even for Germans.

### DOMESTIC WORKERS

Women were recruited for domestic work in Germany mainly in Denmark and the Netherlands in the West, and Poland and the Soviet Union in the East. It is certain that the numbers from Poland and the Soviet Union greatly exceeded the numbers from Denmark and the Netherlands, but exact comparison is impossible. The majority of the foreign domestic workers were employed, not in urban, but in rural households, where they had to do agricultural as well as housework, and the statistics included most of these domestics employed in rural households among agricultural workers. The comparatively low figures of 49,000 foreign domestic workers for the end of 1941<sup>2</sup>, and of 77,000 quoted for July 1943<sup>3</sup> must be accepted with this fact in mind.

Owing to the great scarcity of servants, foreign women were assigned only to certain categories of German families. In the first place, the family must be politically reliable. The selection of eligible families lay in the hands of the labour offices; the local Party representatives participated in the decision. Families with many children and families transplanted as colonists (so-called *Aufbaufamilien*), and families engaged in "reconstruction tasks" in the newly-annexed eastern territories received preference. In every case a guarantee was required that the servant would be given separate accommodation. Especially, "women from the East who are employed as domestic workers may in no case be accommodated together with Germans". Persons who employed foreigners in their

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<sup>1</sup> *Die Wirtschaftskurve* (Frankfort on Main), May 1944, p. 310.

<sup>2</sup> L. MÜNZ, Ministerialrat in the Reich Ministry of Labour, in *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup> *Deutsche Bergwerks-Zeitung*, 29 Dec. 1943, quoted in *International Labour Review*, Vol. L, No. 3, Sept. 1944, p. 342. According to this source, in July 1943 the 77,000 foreign domestic workers represented 7 per cent. of a total of 1,100,000 domestic workers in Germany.

households without authorisation from the competent labour office were liable to heavy penalties.<sup>1</sup>

### *Domestic Workers from the West*

Danish and Belgian women were recruited for domestic work in Germany by recruitment offices in their own countries. They received "recruitment certificates" (*Anwerbebestätigungen*), which, among other matters, contained information on wages and working hours. Usually these women were hired for six months at a time<sup>2</sup>, but found themselves unable to return home at the end of that period. Under an Order issued early in 1943<sup>3</sup> they were not to be left in private homes on the expiry of their contracts, but were to be placed in hospitals, clinics, factory canteens and similar public institutions. Theoretically, they were entitled to the same holiday benefits as Germans, except that it depended on the discretion of their employers whether they should receive the expenses of their journey home. The employers were allowed to pay these expenses, but only as far as the German frontier.<sup>4</sup>

### *Domestic Workers from the East*

Conditions for domestic workers from the East were far worse than for those from the West. Even while at work in the house, domestic workers had to show the "Eastern" badge on their clothing. Their wages were fixed by the Reich labour trustees, but, as the official commentary on the labour law for foreign workers pointed out<sup>5</sup>, these wage scales were not to be made public. Instead, information could "be obtained at the labour office".

Under a Decree of 5 October 1941 concerning the treatment of Poles, Polish domestic workers had to be paid the lowest rate of pay for their respective age groups and types of work, as laid down in the Wage Ceiling Decree of 15 September 1941. They were forbidden to receive gifts, such as Christmas or birthday gratuities, or bonuses for faithful service.

In the summer of 1942, the Reich Labour Trustee for the District of Cologne prescribed the following monthly rates (plus free board and lodging) for "Eastern" women employed in domestic service in his region<sup>6</sup>:

<sup>1</sup> *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 15 June 1942, Part V, p. 378.

<sup>2</sup> BIRKENHOLZ, in *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 661 (1), supplement, 15 Oct. 1942.

<sup>3</sup> *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 6, 25 Feb. 1943, Part V, p. 105; *International Labour Review*, Vol. L, No. 3, Sept. 1944, p. 341.

<sup>4</sup> *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 3, 25 Jan. 1943, Part V, p. 39; *International Labour Review*, loc. cit.

<sup>5</sup> BIRKENHOLZ, loc. cit.

<sup>6</sup> *Kölnische Zeitung*, 3 Sept. 1942.

MONTHLY WAGES OF EASTERN DOMESTIC WORKERS IN THE  
REGION OF COLOGNE

Up to 18 years of age	Monthly wage (RM)	"Eastern" workers' tax (RM)
In the city of Cologne.....	6.60	—
In the outlying districts.....	5.10	—
Over 18 years of age		
In the city of Cologne.....	12.00	9.00
In the outlying districts.....	9.00	4.50

The *Kölnische Zeitung* remarked that a housewife with more than four children paid only half an "Eastern" worker's tax; this seems to indicate that the tax was not deducted from the wage, but paid by the employer. On the other hand, it also stated that under the labour trustee's Order "bad work is to be remunerated by an appropriately lower rate".

In the early autumn of 1942<sup>1</sup>, the Commissioner-General for Manpower organised a special procedure for the large-scale recruitment of Soviet women to work in urban and rural German households. This scheme applied to women of 15 to 35 years of age who were "physically strong and most closely resemble the German type in general appearance". The selection was made by the German recruitment agencies in the occupied territories, where the women were medically examined and then transported in special railway coaches to reception camps in Germany. There they had to undergo another examination. German housewives and peasant women selected them in the reception camps.

The employment conditions of "Eastern" domestic workers were regulated in a lengthy official "Instruction for the Employment of Eastern Domestic Workers" issued by the Commissioner-General for Manpower in agreement with the Head of the Chancellery of the National Socialist Party and other authorities concerned. Part of this Instruction read:

If [in addition to a Soviet woman] the household employs German domestics, the latter must be put in superior and directing positions, so that no feeling of solidarity between the Germans and the women from the East can develop.

... women from the East are to be treated with justice but with severe discipline and the German family must always maintain an appropriate reserve.

The right to free time does not exist. As a matter of principle women from the East may only leave the house in order to attend to the business of the household. However, if their behaviour is satisfactory, they may be allowed to remain out of the house once a week for three hours without attending to business. Their absence from the house must never extend after darkness and must terminate at

<sup>1</sup> Instructions of 8 September 1942; *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 27, Part I, p. 411. Cf. "Soviet Workers in Germany", in *International Labour Review*, Vol. XLVII, No. 5, May 1943, pp. 588-589.

8 p.m. at the latest. They are forbidden to visit eating-places, cinemas, theatres and similar places of recreation for German or foreign workers. They are also forbidden to visit churches.

The head of the household which employed an "Eastern" domestic worker had to ensure that these and all other regulations were strictly observed. The Instruction laid special stress on the prohibition of sexual intercourse with foreign women, and upon the obligation to remove them should they become pregnant. If a servant violated the labour discipline as outlined in the Instruction, the head of the household was ordered to report to the Gestapo. Control of alien domestic workers was entirely in the hands of regional officers of the Gestapo (*Staatspolizei-Leitstellen*). In cases concerning these foreigners, the administrative agencies as well as the ordinary police authorities were to follow the Gestapo's instructions.

The most oppressive aspect of this service was that, except in case of pregnancy, the deportee could do nothing to terminate it. The instruction stated expressly that "for the time being a vacation shall not be granted", and that "domestic women workers from the East are recruited for an indefinite period".

In the course of the "total" mobilisation of manpower which was started early in 1943 to overcome the "ever-growing difficulties" in the manpower situation<sup>1</sup>, the labour offices were empowered to take domestic workers (German as well as foreign) from private homes and allocate them to more urgent work, whether domestic or of any other kind. After that date, the number of foreign domestic workers, particularly in urban households, steadily decreased. In August 1944, one of the six points in the programme of the newly-appointed Commissioner-General for Total War Effort, Goebbels, was that all foreign domestic workers should be compulsorily transferred to armament work. It appears, however, that this rule was not readily obeyed.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, as has been observed already, no distinct line could be drawn between domestic and agricultural workers, particularly on small farms. It must be assumed, therefore, that even after Goebbels' Order, thousands of women recruited from the East were forced to continue work in the households and on the farms of German farmers.

By Order of 29 June 1944, new regulations concerning domestic

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<sup>1</sup> Decree by the Commissioner-General for Manpower, of 27 January 1943.

<sup>2</sup> For example, the *Bremen Zeitung* of 11 September 1944 reiterated that "Eastern" and Polish female domestic workers were now mobilised for tasks other than domestic work; those servants who had not yet done so must therefore appear at the Bremen labour offices on 14 September, bringing with them their luggage, food cards and documents. The article warned heads of households whose domestics did not comply with this Order that they would be liable to the most severe penalties.

servants from the East were issued, in the course of the new "mild" policy towards Soviet workers. These milder regulations serve in fact to reveal the plight of these women. Working hours were to be "between 6 a.m. and 9 p.m." A "suitable" amount of free time was to be granted each week; if this free time was spent outside the house, the regulations of the Security Police had to be observed. Within the four wage areas in the Reich, monthly wages for domestic workers, in addition to board and lodging, were between 7 RM and 37 RM. But where a child under 14 years of age was employed, her wages had to be reduced to a suitable amount. The head of the household had moreover the right to pay less than the minimum wage if he or she found the work inefficient.<sup>1</sup>

### MEASURES CONCERNING DECEASED FOREIGN WORKERS

In the earlier stages of the war, on the death of a foreign worker (except Poles and Russians)<sup>2</sup>, provision was made to allow one near relative to travel to Germany to attend the funeral. The travelling expenses as well as the expenses of the funeral in Germany, could be paid by the employer, or by the German sickness fund, or, in the last resort, by the fund administering the unemployment contributions. At first, it was also permissible to arrange for transportation of the body to the country of origin. In fact, it was argued that, as an additional inducement to a foreigner to accept employment in Germany, he should be assured beforehand that, in case of death, the expenses of transporting his body home and of his burial there would be met. The official comment was that the grant of such benefits should be considered as "a measure to encourage the acceptance of employment".<sup>3</sup>

However, under a Decree by the Reich Minister of Labour, of 20 July 1942, transportation of the body of a foreign worker, of whatever nationality, was unconditionally prohibited, "even though it would not be difficult to procure, at or near the locality where the death occurred, a zinc coffin for the transportation".<sup>4</sup>

As far as deceased workers from the East were concerned, long before their mass importation reached its peak, various restrictive regulations were issued by the Reich Minister of Labour, Seldte, which aimed at reducing all formalities to an absolute minimum.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 2 July 1944.

<sup>2</sup> TIMM, in *Der Einsatz*, p. 16.

<sup>3</sup> *Arbeitseinsatz und Arbeitslosenhilfe*, No. 3-4, Feb. 1943, p. 31.

<sup>4</sup> Dr. ADAM, in *idem.*, No. 1-2, Jan. 1943, p. 7. Dr. TIMM declared that "the possibility of granting permission to exhume and transport a body after the war is a matter to be decided later".

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Decree in *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 1940, Part I, p. 528; *idem.*, 1941, Part I, pp. 326 and 399.

After his appointment as Commissioner-General for Manpower, Sauckel issued detailed instructions concerning deceased "Eastern" workers of non-German race, in an Order of 13 May 1942. Under this Order, which was not published until more than five months later, on 25 October 1942<sup>1</sup>, a distinction was to be drawn between workers of non-German race from the District of Byalistok and the territory of the "Reich Commissariat Ostland" with the exception of "White Russia" on the one hand, and the remaining parts of the eastern occupied territory, on the other.

For deceased workers from the first-named regions, Sauckel prohibited, for the duration of the war, their transportation home, even if their families were ready to pay the expenses; he also prohibited the granting of subsidies to members of the family for their participation in the burial services or their visit to the place of burial. For deceased workers from the remaining occupied territories in the East, Sauckel decreed that the transportation of bodies was forbidden not only during, but after the war, whether the expenses were to be paid by the family or anybody else. Furthermore, he expressly stipulated that this rule was also to apply to deceased members of the workers' families.

Referring to this Order, Fritz Sauckel issued the following instructions in a circular addressed to all local and regional German labour offices on 9 February 1943<sup>2</sup>:

Whatever measures are needed after the death of an Eastern worker shall be taken by the labour office, unless the latter delegates this task to the employer of the deceased, in which case the employer has to observe the same regulations.

If an Eastern worker dies while under arrest he shall be buried by the police authorities or by the prison authorities, as the case may be. Provided the local circumstances allow, a coffin of the simplest quality shall be supplied. Cremation is permissible and indeed, if the local conditions allow, desirable. However, burial must be granted to the deceased if he belonged to the Mohammedan faith, which prohibits cremation; for example, in the case of a Tartar.

As a matter of principle, the burial must take place at the public cemetery, in plots sufficiently separated from those destined for the burial of Germans. The same applies to the burial of ashes. No objection is to be made if Eastern workers wish to deposit wreaths of flowers.

It is permissible for small groups of Eastern workers—10 to 15 men—to take part in burial ceremonies. The decision must be taken by the employer. In exceptional cases—for instance, if a camp leader, etc., is buried—larger groups may take part. In these cases, however, the police must be informed.

Neither immigrant priests nor other priests are allowed to participate in the ceremonies. However, there is no objection to allowing acceptable Eastern workers or so-called lay priests to direct simple ceremonies.

The public cemeteries were accordingly ordered to make plots

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<sup>1</sup> *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 30, 25 Oct. 1942, Part I, p. 455.

<sup>2</sup> *Idem*, No. 26, 25 Feb. 1943.

available for the "Eastern" workers who died in Germany at an ample distance from the plots intended for graves of Germans.<sup>1</sup>

If an "Eastern" worker left any possessions, various regulations provided for the transfer of the money assets either to a German-controlled bank or to a branch office of the Reich Treasury. In a circular Order of 10 December 1943<sup>2</sup>, Fritz Sauckel stipulated that the assets of "Eastern" workers who died within the Reich territory should be subject to the following rules.

As a first step the labour office, through the intermediary of the Labour Section of the Economic Department for the Eastern Occupied Territories (*Wirtschaftsstab Ost, Chefgruppe Arbeit*) had to ascertain the names and addresses of the next of kin of the deceased. If these data were obtained, the savings certificate of the deceased (*Ostarbeiter Sparkarte*, which he or she owned instead of cash), and whatever cash the deceased had left, or might be collected among his fellow workers (limit, 300 RM) had to be remitted for transfer in favour of the next of kin to the Berlin Office of the Central Economic Bank for the Ukraine. All other objects were to be sent by mail to the next of kin, at the expense of the *Reichsstock* (the former unemployment insurance fund). The maximum weight of these parcels might not exceed 10 kg or 22 lbs. The circular did not provide for cases in which the possessions weighed more than 10 kgs, but laid down the mailing fee for parcels weighing less than one kg (2.2 lbs.).

If the legal heirs could not be ascertained (which was, of course, generally the case, since at the time the Decree was issued the German armies had already been expelled from large parts of the territory previously occupied, and even in the parts still held by Germany communication was extremely difficult), belongings other than cash might be handed to other Soviet relatives working in the Reich. However, under regulations issued by Alfred Rosenberg, Reich Minister for the Eastern Occupied Territory, cash assets, if no relatives entitled to inherit were known, went to the substitute legal heir, namely, the Treasury (*Fiskus*) of the Reich Commissariat for the Ukraine, or the Treasury of the General District of White Russia.

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<sup>1</sup> *Reichsgesundheitsblatt*, 16 June 1943. An Order published in the *Reichsarbeitsblatt* on 25 October 1944 repealed the special restrictions with respect to the burying of Soviet and Polish workers. Their funerals had no longer to be conducted as cheaply as possible; thenceforward they were allowed to be held under the same regulations as for those of other foreign workers.

<sup>2</sup> *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 10 Jan. 1944, Part I, p. 15.

## CHAPTER XII

### PROVISION FOR DEPENDANTS

As a matter of general policy, the German authorities systematically encouraged foreigners to earmark a portion of their income for transfer to their home countries. The "manual" for foreign industrial workers of 4 May 1942<sup>1</sup> expressly drew their attention to the fact that they "can transfer from Germany part of their earnings to their families or to any other destination in their own country". The manual pointed out that the transfer should primarily aim at securing the support of the dependants whom the worker had left behind, and declared that "every worker is expected to make the fullest use of the possibility of sending home what he has saved from his earnings". Many contingents and many individuals from the west, south and south-east of Europe had to undertake to send a large percentage of their income to their families.<sup>2</sup> In these cases the German employers were required automatically to deduct the agreed portion of the foreigners' wages or salaries from every payment due to them.

The scheme did not cover workers whose countries had been first occupied and then annexed by Germany (such as Austria, Alsace-Lorraine, the Sudeten region of Czechoslovakia, Luxembourg, the annexed parts of pre-war Poland and a few small regions on the western and eastern frontiers of the 1938 Reich territory). Workers from these countries were free to send a remittance to their families or not, as they pleased.<sup>3</sup> Nor did the scheme originally cover workers from territories not formally annexed by Germany,

<sup>1</sup> *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 25 May 1942, Part I, p. 258.

<sup>2</sup> Special arrangements were made between Germany and neutral countries such as Switzerland and Sweden for the wage transfer of the small numbers of their citizens working in Germany.

<sup>3</sup> The transfer and clearing scheme did, however, apply to *non-native* foreign workers employed in these annexed territories, such as Frenchmen working in a Czech factory, or Italians working in an Austrian mine, etc. For example, from 10 May 1940, when Luxembourg was included in the German currency system, Luxembourgers working in Germany proper were allowed to send home their savings without formalities. Belgians working in Luxembourg within 46 miles (75 km) from the Belgian-Luxembourg frontier received part of their wages (to cover board and lodging) in German money, and the rest in Belgian money, which they were free to send to Belgium; but their employers had to submit weekly wage lists to the German Foreign Exchange Control Agency (*Devisenstelle*). Other non-Luxembourgers employed in Luxembourg had to send their remittances, through their employers, to the central clearing agency in Berlin.



but incorporated in the German currency area, the Protectorate of Bohemia-Moravia, the Netherlands, the occupied regions of northern Yugoslavia, and the region of Byalistok. Workers from these territories were free to send money to their relatives by ordinary means (cheque, or money orders, but not cash), if they used the official channels. Sometimes they had to use the transfer system described below.<sup>1</sup>

But the great majority of the conscripted workers were compelled to use only the official wage transfer scheme. The chief incentive was, of course, the foreigners' desire to help their families. To earmark part of their earnings for transfer was their only legal means of getting an equivalent of these earnings outside Germany. Indeed, in the tightly regulated European exchange control system, this was declared to be a privilege granted to foreign workers and was administered accordingly.

At first sight, a policy of systematically inducing foreigners not to spend their earnings in Germany, but to earmark considerable portions of them for transfer home, may appear surprising. In adopting it the German authorities were prompted by various considerations. It drastically reduced the purchasing power of a considerable part of Germany's working population; in fact, the purchasing power of masses of low-paid foreigners, such as Italian agricultural workers, was reduced to nothing. Their combined purchasing power would otherwise have added to the drain on the supply of consumers' goods and become an additional source of inflationary trends in Germany. It reduced (and again, for the lower-paid majority, it practically eliminated) any possibility of obtaining private accommodation and individual meals, which were more expensive than mass accommodation and mass feeding. But while reducing consumption by the foreigners in Germany, this policy at the same time increased the inflationary trend in the German-occupied countries. The policy was, secondly, intended to have a favourable psychological effect, because it gave the worker the feeling that by his work and sacrifice he was at least able to take care of his family. Moreover, the fact that in some of the most distressed areas of German-dominated Europe dependants of the absent workers received money (coming apparently

<sup>1</sup> German sources do not reveal the reasons for which the transfer scheme had sometimes to be used even by workers from the territories absorbed into the German currency area. Cf. CZECHOSLOVAK MINISTRY OF SOCIAL WELFARE: *Czechoslovak Workers in Germany* (London, 1943), Part I, pp. 24-25. On 4 July 1940 *Der Neue Tag* reported that for one year the total wage remittances of Czechoslovak workers in Germany were given by the National Bank of Bohemia-Moravia, on 6 June 1940, as 104,339,465 Czechoslovak crowns, which represented well under 1,000 Czechoslovak crowns a year per German-employed Czechoslovak worker (quoted in Sheila Grant DUFF: *A German Protectorate: The Czechs under Nazi Rule* (London, Macmillan, 1942), p. 155).

from their breadwinners employed in the Reich) would, it was hoped, induce other persons to go to Germany or encourage other families to persuade some of their members to go.

Thirdly, the extremely rigid German system (methodically built up since 1933) of control of all matters concerning money transfer and exchange of currency, gave Germany an additional tool for regimenting foreigners in Greater Germany and their dependants outside it.

In fact, the system of money transfer was used as a further means of controlling the actual mobilisation and distribution of workers; for only foreigners recruited and placed through the intermediary of the Reich Ministry of Labour were entitled to earmark part of their earnings for transfer.<sup>1</sup>

Infraction of these rules resulted in the suspension of the privilege, and foreigners who were in concentration camps or in camps for hard labour, or who had "deserted" from their place of employment, were also automatically prevented from transferring money to the German clearing authorities, even if they happened to possess savings from their wages.

But the most important aspect of the matter was that, in accordance with bilateral arrangements, these amounts were merely credited to the various foreign Governments or foreign central banks on the books of the German exchange authorities. Their value (expressed in non-German currency) was "in the meantime" being paid to the workers' relatives by the foreign Governments or foreign central banks concerned.

A typical procedure was as follows: the German central clearing agency (or one of the few German banks specially designated to collect these funds from workers of certain nationalities) would receive, via the employer, from the labour recruit the portion of his wage earmarked for transfer to his dependants. At the same time, the central bank of the country for which the money was destined would be: (a) notified that the German clearing agency had, on its own books, credited the account of the respective central bank, and (b) requested to make the payment (in foreign currency) itself in lieu of Germany.

The accounts of the foreign central banks were, to all intents and purposes, blocked. It depended on Germany's discretion to what extent the other countries received exports from Germany which diminished their accumulated credits on the books of the German clearing agency. The procedure was clearly depicted in the following passage from the official report (*Verwaltungsbericht*) of the German Reichsbank for its administrative year of 1942:

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<sup>1</sup> STILLER, in *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 367.

Germany's clearing debts [to foreign countries] have been further increased. However, this increase was due less to a change in the relation between imports and exports than to services in the field of war economics rendered by foreign countries. *This applies first of all to the use of foreign workers in Germany; the savings from their wages, which have reached considerable amounts, have been transferred within the framework of clearing agreements.*<sup>1</sup>

The complicated details of the European clearing system organised by Germany since 1933, but fully developed only after its military conquests in the early stages of the war, need not be described. The essential feature of the clearing agreements in German-dominated Europe was that all sums destined to be transferred from Germany to dependent foreign countries were paid, in Reichsmarks, into the special accounts which these countries had with the German Clearing Office in Berlin (*Deutsche Verrechnungskasse*); and all payments due to Germany by debtors in those foreign countries were paid (in national currency) into the accounts which the German Clearing Office held with the central banks of the foreign countries. The conversion took place at exchange rates arbitrarily fixed by Germany.

The commodities exported and services rendered by Germany to its partners in the clearing scheme were not sufficient to cancel the partners' increasing credit surplus. The "clearing balances" were always, and increasingly, in favour of the dependent countries; that is, the dependent countries owed Germany less than Germany owed them. With the deterioration of Germany's balance of payments, the countries of origin of the foreign workers became the creditors of the Reich. The Reich paid no interest on these debit balances.

In this disequilibrium of payments, the transfer of wages of labour recruits played an increasingly important part. In the clearing accounts, the debts incurred by Germany in respect of wage remittances to foreign countries were second only to the German clearing debts resulting from its importations from the dependent countries. German war economy absorbed raw materials and commodities from the occupied and dominated countries and was unable to produce and deliver in exchange manufactured goods with which to pay for its imports. To the clearing debts already piled up from these foreign trade operations, were added increasing debts from current accounts for services, especially the services rendered by the recruited workers in Germany. At a time when Germany had a permanently passive balance of payments, practically all the wage transfers thus became an additional burden on the various creditor countries.

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<sup>1</sup> *Die Deutsche Volkswirtschaft*, 12 (1943), No. 6, p. 211 (italics added). The report gives no figures.

It should be noted, however, that the mechanism of wage transfers could not be handled by Germany unilaterally. The German regulations prohibited the actual transfer of foreigners' wage remittances to their families abroad. Germany had, therefore, to make arrangements with the foreign authorities to pay out, in their respective currencies, sums equivalent to the remittances received by the German clearing agency. For this purpose Germany made arrangements with the various authorities abroad. For example, soon after the termination of the Balkan campaign in 1941, the German clearing treaty with the puppet Government of Croatia provided that:

Payments from wage savings of Croat workers who are employed in the German Reich are to be remitted to the account "Savings of Workers' Wages" to be established for this purpose with the German clearing fund. *The Croat State Bank shall immediately pay out the exchange value of this remittance to the assignee.*<sup>1</sup>

Thus the Croat State Bank undertook the obligation, when notified of a remittance made by a German-employed Croat to the German clearing agency, of paying immediately an equivalent amount in Croat money to his family; "immediately" meant that the Croat State Bank was not to wait until the account of the German Clearing Office with the Croat State Bank had been credited with an equivalent amount in Croat currency. This was an exception to the rule governing the payment of commercial and similar transactions, under which the Croat State Bank had to pay to the Croat assignee (creditor) the equivalent of an amount remitted to the German clearing agency only if payments by Croat debtors to the German clearing agency were made.

As a typical example of a clearing agreement made at a later stage of the war, the following stipulations of the German-Albanian Clearing Agreement, signed in Tirana on 27 December 1943, may be cited. Following the usual general principle, the agreement provided that no direct payments were to be made from Germany to Albania, or vice versa; instead, "payments between Greater Germany and Albania shall be effected in Germany exclusively through the German Central Clearing Office, and in Albania exclusively through the Albanian National Bank. This applies in particular. . . (c) to payments deriving from wage savings of Albanian workers." Remittances made in Germany and destined for Albania had to be paid to the German Central Clearing Office in favour of the Reichsmark account of the Albanian National Bank; thereupon the Albanian National Bank was notified by the Central Clearing Office, credited the latter on its own books with the equivalent

<sup>1</sup> Agreement concerning the regulation of the clearing between the German Reich and Croatia (*Deutsch-Kroatisches Verrechnungsabkommen*), of 30 May 1941; *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 20 June 1941, No. 25, Part II, p. 231 (italics added).

amount in Albanian francs, and made payment in Albanian francs to the assignee in Albania.<sup>1</sup>

The details of the transaction varied for the citizens of the different countries and were also subject to changes at different stages of the war. As a rule employers were responsible for ensuring that the amount deposited for transfer by an individual foreigner did not exceed what, under the best of circumstances, he might have saved from his earnings during a period ranging from one to three months.<sup>2</sup> If the foreigner violated these restrictions, and deposited German money in excess of these maxima, the money was liable to be seized by the German authorities.<sup>3</sup>

In the middle of 1942 these limits for the transfer of the savings of foreigners to their home countries varied between 40 RM (the monthly maximum allowed to an unmarried Slovak agricultural worker) and 300 RM (for a French married or unmarried salaried employee).<sup>4</sup> For certain categories of workers—for instance, Italians and Spaniards—no maxima were fixed, but they still had to comply with all the formalities prescribed by the German currency exchange provisions. The different limits established for the different countries reflected the systematic policy of discrimination between the various categories of workers.

The restrictions aimed, principally, at preventing the labour recruit from "smuggling" other persons' money out of Germany, against the German exchange control regulations.

In order to diminish the opposition of French and Belgian recruited workers, the Germans did not object to schemes under which Belgian and French funds made advance payments to families of recruited breadwinners during the first few weeks of absence. In Belgium, the *Commission de l'assistance publique* made weekly allowances to the dependent families of workers who had left for Germany, beginning these allowances immediately after the provider's departure. From the autumn of 1942, during the first six weeks after the worker's departure the *Commission* paid a subsidy to the family which had not to be repaid by the worker,

<sup>1</sup> *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 4 Feb. 1944, Part II, p. 7. The Treaty, as is typical of these clearing agreements, contains no arrangements concerning the eventual straightening out of the clearing balance.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Circular of the Reich Minister of Economic Affairs, for Danish Workers and Employees, of 29 April 1943; *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 15, 25 May 1943, Part I, p. 302.

<sup>3</sup> STILLER, in *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 366.

<sup>4</sup> For certain nationalities, for example, Danes, Finns and Norwegians, the maximum transfer allowed to married workers was twice that allowed to unmarried workers; while in the case of Bulgarians, Greeks, Croats and Rumanians, no difference between married and unmarried workers was made. For Frenchmen the monthly transfer maximum was 160 RM for married wage earners, 120 RM for unmarried wage earners and 300 RM for unmarried or married salaried employees. Belgians and Frenchmen had the privilege of transferring a supplementary amount up to 300 RM after continuous employment for six months.

but was furnished by the labour office. The amount was 75 Belgian francs for the wife and 25 francs for each child aged 16 or less.<sup>1</sup> In the spring of 1943, the German Military Commander not only tightened the rules concerning fines, imprisonment and confiscation of property for Belgian evaders of compulsory labour, punishment of their relatives and any other persons assisting the evader, and trial by court-martial at the discretion of the military administration<sup>2</sup>, but he also authoritatively fixed the amounts which had to be compulsorily deducted from the wages of German-employed Belgians for support of their dependants. The deductions varied according to the composition of the worker's dependent family, from 750 Belgian francs for the wife, to 800, 900, 1,000, 1,200 or 1,400 francs for a family with one to five dependent children respectively.<sup>3</sup> An Order of 29 April 1943, issued jointly by the General Secretaries of the Belgian Ministries of the Interior and Public Health, Labour and Social Welfare, and Finance, reassessed the advance payments to be made to families of recruited Belgians before the arrival of the first wage "transfers". The weekly advance payment, payable from the Sunday following the worker's departure until remittances were received, up to a maximum period of 13 weeks, was fixed at 210 francs per household per week, plus 14, 37, 74, 127 or 196 francs respectively for families with one to five children under 15 years of age or incapable of work, and an additional allowance of 70 francs for every child after the fifth.<sup>4</sup>

According to preliminary investigations by the Belgian Government after liberation, the advance payments made by the *Assistance publique* amounted approximately to:

				Francs
in 1940:	for families of	Flemish workers:		3,220,000
	" "	Wallon	"	1,082,000
in 1941:	" "	Flemish	"	35,000,000
	" "	Wallon	"	16,000,000
in 1942:	" "	Flemish	"	9,077,000
	" "	Wallon	"	5,111,000 <sup>5</sup>

The figures for 1943 and 1944 could not yet be estimated.

<sup>1</sup> *Le Nouveau Journal*, 3 Oct. 1942. This allowance was to be paid to Belgian families whose breadwinners had signed a contract with any German recruitment agency after 14 Sept. 1942.

<sup>2</sup> Order of the Military Commander in Belgium and northern France, of 30 April 1943; *Verordnungsblatt des Militärbefehlshabers in Belgien und Nordfrankreich für die besetzten Gebiete*, 6 May 1943.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*; cf. *International Labour Review*, Vol. XLVIII, No. 6, Dec. 1943, pp. 769-770.

<sup>4</sup> *Moniteur belge*, 11 May 1943; cf. *International Labour Review*, loc. cit., p. 770.

<sup>5</sup> Information furnished to the I.L.O. by the Belgian Government in February 1945. The Belgian Government's investigation also revealed that approximately 55 of these approximately 70 million francs were refunded by the Belgian *Banque d'Emission* during 1940-1942 (see p. 171).

In France, a period usually of 12 weeks had to elapse before the equivalents of the amounts allotted by the deportees could reach their families in France. During that period the municipal tax collectors paid to the dependent French families an allowance at the rate of 110 francs a week for the wife (or for the parents or grandparents of an unmarried worker) and 65 francs a week for each child or other dependant in communities of more than 15,000 inhabitants; in communities with smaller populations the rates were 90 francs and 40 francs respectively. In November 1942, the press announced that Pierre Laval had decided to extend the period for which this allowance would be payable to 20 weeks. For the first eight weeks after the worker's departure, Germany promised to bear the cost of the allowance and to refund the money to the French treasury. The allowance for the following weeks had to be deducted from the wages received by the worker in Germany and remitted to the German Central Clearing Office.<sup>1</sup>

As far as "Eastern" workers and payments to their dependants at home were concerned, no bilateral treaty, could, of course, be made, because no national authorities existed in those regions. The German authorities therefore themselves created, for example, a Central Economic Bank for the Ukraine with its main seat in Rovno (share capital of 200 million RM) which was supplemented by seventeen banks, called "economic banks", in the principal Ukrainian towns, and over 200 smaller branches. The Ukrainian worker was allowed to buy from his employer special savings stamps worth 1, 3, 5 or 10 RM. These stamps were affixed to a savings card made out in his name. Both cards and stamps were issued to the employer by the Berlin branch of the Central Economic Bank of Rovno. The "Eastern" worker, through his employer, remitted the stamped card to this branch, whereupon a Ukrainian branch of the Central Economic Bank paid out an equivalent sum in local currency to the assignee in the Ukraine.<sup>2</sup>

### THE STATISTICAL ASPECT

No detailed statistics have so far been available to show how great have been the amounts involved in the German scheme of wage transfers, or, in other words, how much money, as expressed in German currency, has been remitted by foreign workers for their dependent families at home. But two conclusions can be drawn from the few figures which have been made public. On the one

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *International Labour Review*, Vol. XLVII, No. 3, Mar. 1943, p. 337.

<sup>2</sup> *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 1942, No. 24, Part I, p. 371; *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 18 Jan. 1943; cf. *International Labour Review*, Vol. XLVII, No. 5, May 1943, pp. 585-586.

hand, it was very exceptional for foreigners to be able to fill the quotas allotted to them for periodical remittances. On the other hand, the sum total of remittances made by millions of labour recruits over a period of years was considerable. This is borne out by the incomplete data available.

A report published in May 1943<sup>1</sup> asserted that the *Deutsche Bank*, one of the few German banks officially designated to accept remittances from foreign workers, held the accounts of many hundreds of thousands of Frenchmen, Belgians, Netherlands, Hungarians, Croats and Italians.<sup>2</sup> On the average, the report stated, every foreign worker had, up to that time, remitted 516 RM to be forwarded to his family.

Under earlier agreements, every Italian worker was allowed to send home a maximum of 88 RM per month at the special favourable exchange rate of 7.63 lire to the Reichsmark, while anything exceeding that amount was calculated at a lower rate. But as a result of a later agreement (concluded early in 1941, when prices had risen in Italy) they were allowed to send whatever they could save, at the rate of 7.63 lire to the Reichsmark.<sup>3</sup> Total savings sent home during 1941 amounted to 230 million RM or 1,750 million lire, according to a report of the *Banca Commerciale Italiana*.<sup>4</sup> German sources reported early in 1942 that savings sent home by Italian workers totalled 1 million RM daily<sup>5</sup> and the *Essener National-Zeitung* of 25 July 1942 stated that Italian workers headed the list of foreigners who made use of wage transfers; 90 to 95 per cent. of all Italians regularly remitted parts of their wages to the *Deutsche Bank*, while only 50 per cent. of Belgian workers did so.

According to information published in the *Monatshefte für NS-Sozialpolitik*, the wage transfer for 12 European countries which participated at that time in the German transfer arrangements amounted, between "the beginning of 1940 and the end of July 1942, to 718 million RM. This figure does not include the wage transfers of workers to the Protectorate of Bohemia-Moravia, the Government-General, the occupied eastern territories, the Nether-

<sup>1</sup> *Monatshefte für NS-Sozialpolitik*, No. 7-12, May 1943, p. 78.

<sup>2</sup> In addition the *Deutsche Bank* (according to a circular Decree by Sauckel, addressed to all regional labour offices and local labour offices, of 11 March 1943; *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 25 Mar. 1943, Part I, p. 193), also handled the remittances of Bulgarians, Danes, Finns, Norwegians, Serbs and Hungarians, while the *Dresdner Bank* was in charge of the remittances of Greeks and Slovaks, the *Deutsche Überseeische Bank* of Spaniards, and the *Amiliches Kroatiches Reisebureau*, Berlin, of Croats. (The latter agency appears to have transferred the money received to the *Deutsche Bank*.) The remittances of workers recruited from the Soviet Union and Poland were to be handled by the German labour offices.

<sup>3</sup> *Giornale d'Italia*, 5 Feb. 1941. After the Italian surrender the exchange rate was lowered to 10 lire to the Reichsmark.

<sup>4</sup> *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 19 Mar. 1942.

<sup>5</sup> *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, 20 Apr. 1942.



lands, Croatia and Rumania". The figure of 718 million RM paid by the foreign workers of certain European countries to the German exchange authorities therefore represented, as this official National Socialist publication emphasised, "only a portion" of the amounts transmitted by all foreigners to the German clearing agency during the period of approximately two and a half years.

The 1943 report of the Bank for International Settlements in Basle stated that the monthly wage remittances of foreign workers from some 17 countries rose from an average of 10 million RM in 1940 to an average of 60 million RM in the first few months of 1943.<sup>1</sup>

These figures tally with a report published in the summer of 1943 in Switzerland<sup>2</sup> on the wage remittances of German-employed foreigners destined for 17 European countries and territories. The report stated that the wage remittances destined for the Protectorate of Bohemia-Moravia, the Netherlands and the Government-General<sup>3</sup> were not included, because these regions were considered German territory as far as the German clearing system was concerned. Excluding, therefore, these three regions, the wage remittances amounted to:

109.0	million RM	in 1940
382.7	" "	in 1941
605.6	" "	in 1942
203.3	" "	in the first four months of 1943

Total: 1,300.6 million RM from January 1940 to April 1943, inclusive.

The amounts which "Eastern" workers were able to set aside for their dependants were pitifully small. Out of the sum of 1,300.6 million RM reported to have been set aside for transfer by foreign workers from 17 occupied territories up to the end of April 1943, only 7½ million RM were, according to the same source, destined for dependants of "Eastern" workers, an average equivalent to less than one Reichsmark per worker per year. By the spring of 1943 the transfers for these eastern territories had, on the average, reached one million RM a month, which was still very much less

<sup>1</sup> BANK FOR INTERNATIONAL SETTLEMENTS: *13th Annual Report, 1 April 1942—31 March 1943* (Basle, autumn 1943), p. 61. The report adds that the increase of Germany's clearing indebtedness by some 7,000 million RM during the year 1942 was to a considerable degree caused by these wage remittances from foreign workers.

<sup>2</sup> *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 30 June 1943.

<sup>3</sup> According to the official comment on the transfer rules by Dr. Timm (*Der Einsatz ausländischer Arbeitskräfte in Deutschland*, 1942, p. 20), the region of Byalistok, and not the Government-General, was included in the German currency area. However, the discrepancy in the actual figures cannot be very great, in view of the small amounts which the workers both from the Government-General and the region of Byalistok were able to set aside for transfer home.

than half a Reichsmark per worker a month. Compared with the then monthly average remittance of 60 million RM, this represented less than 2 per cent. of all remittances, whereas the number of "Eastern" workers was at that time well over 50 per cent. of all foreigners deported for work in Germany.

At the end of 1943, German sources estimated that Germany's debt for foreign advance payments of wage remittances totalled 2,000 million RM. Most probably this figure did not include the very considerable transfers made within the German currency system to dependants of Czechoslovak and Netherlands workers (as well as the small amounts paid to dependants in the occupied eastern territories).

Without a thorough examination of German financial manipulations during the war, it is impossible to ascertain whether the 2,000 million RM which, until 1943, the various European countries are estimated to have paid on behalf of Germany under the heading of wage transfers, actually represent the sum total of remittances made by foreign workers to the German Central Clearing Office up to that time, and what were the amounts subsequently remitted by them.

At the present stage, it is only possible to indicate the magnitude of the scheme. For example, the extent to which the German clearing system burdened the economy of France (the transfer scheme between Germany and France was in force from November 1940) can be seen from the figures published by the Bank for International Settlements<sup>1</sup>:

FRENCH BUDGET AND TREASURY ACCOUNTS  
(in 1,000 millions of French francs)

	1941	1942	1943
Expenditure — budget.....	122	133	144
Armistice:			
Occupation costs.....	130	124½	210
German deficit on clearing.....	12	33	50
Treasury advances and sundry charges.....	2	15	15
Total Treasury outlay.....	266	305½	419
Taxation and other ordinary revenue.....	79	96	102
Total Treasury credit financing.....	187	209½	317

<sup>1</sup> BANK FOR INTERNATIONAL SETTLEMENTS, *op. cit.*, p. 193. It will be noted that clearing transactions and occupation costs are accounted for separately. This used to be the case for all German-occupied countries, with the exception of Denmark, where occupation levies were compensated against the clearing transactions. In the case of the French budget, large amounts were paid out of the occupation costs to workers employed for the German armed forces in France, especially on the fortifications and "robot" bomb-launching sites built by the Todt Organisation.

The payments made by France on account of the wage transfers of French workers are included in the item "German deficit on clearing" ("advances by the French Treasury to the French Clearing Office to finance the deficit on Franco-German clearing").<sup>1</sup> According to this source, the item increased from 12,000 million French francs in 1941 to 33,000 million in 1942 and 50,000 million in 1943.

On the French side, most of the monetary transactions involving German-employed French workers were carried out by the *Crédit Lyonnais*. According to preliminary information collected by the French authorities after liberation<sup>2</sup>, the *Crédit Lyonnais* made the following payments to the debit of Germany (in French francs):

Payments on the basis of transfer notifications (3,808,862 notifications) sent from Germany between 1 November and 31 July 1944 (exchange value of 490,711,920 RM) . . . .	9,814,238,400
Payments for leave cheques ( <i>chèques permissionnaires</i> ) issued in Germany (exchange value of 4,265,499 RM) . . . . .	85,309,980
Payments for leave vouchers ( <i>bons de permissionnaires</i> ) presented by French workers while on home leave . . . . .	1,667,562,792
Total	11,567,111,172

The same preliminary investigation revealed that the remittances made by French workers in Germany, and thus the payments made by the *Crédit Lyonnais* to French assignees, were particularly high in May 1944, and then fell off during the last two months of German occupation:

May 1944 . . . . .	Frs. 846,046,696	(275,176 individual transfers)
June 1944 . . . . .	" 661,600,790	(219,573 " " )
July 1944 . . . . .	" 466,990,293	(154,423 " " )

It is interesting to note that as late as 15 July 1944 Pierre Laval, in the name of the Vichy régime, issued a law<sup>3</sup> authorising the Vichy Government to guarantee to indemnify, within one month, the French banks for the errors occurring in these transactions "owing to interruptions or difficulties of communication" (with Germany). This was done to encourage the continuation of payments of "transferred" amounts despite the decreasing number of transfer orders arriving from Germany.

The French authorities have ascertained that the sums paid out by French institutions on behalf of Germany were never actually transmitted to France from Germany, but merely credited within the framework of the clearing.

<sup>1</sup> BANK FOR INTERNATIONAL SETTLEMENTS, *op. cit.*, p. 193, footnote 5.

<sup>2</sup> The information on France in the following paragraphs was furnished to the I.L.O. in January 1945 by the French Ministry of Prisoners of War, Deported Persons and Refugees.

<sup>3</sup> No. 385 of 15 July 1944 concerning the transfer of savings of French workers in Germany; *Journal officiel*, 26 July 1944.

For Belgium, the technical arrangements were different, but the result was the same: to make the German-dominated country, and not Germany, pay exchange value of wage savings remitted to Germany.<sup>1</sup> By Decree of 27 June 1940, the German Military Commander in Brussels created a special bank, called the *Banque d'Emission*, empowered it to issue banknotes in Belgian francs having the force of legal tender in occupied Belgium, and thus provided the funds needed, among other purposes, for financing the wage clearing.<sup>2</sup> The bank, whose capital was 150 million francs (15,000 shares at 10,000 francs each) was completely under German domination. "All important measures" carried out by it were subject to approbation by the German commissioner at the head of it. The German Military Commander had the right to appoint its officials. Any employee could be dismissed without notice. The bank and its principal officers were expressly exempt from the Belgian law concerning public supervision of banks; the amount of banknotes issued by the *Banque d'Emission* had merely to be published in the official gazette of the German Military Commander. The bank was exempt from fees and taxes of any sort, as well as from the obligation of being entered in the Belgian commercial register.<sup>3</sup>

The *Banque d'Emission* did not come into contact with the Belgian public. Individual transfer orders were handled, on the German side, by the *Deutsche Bank*, which, by direct agreement of 18 July 1940 with the Belgian *Kredietbank voor Handel en Nijverheid*, appointed the latter as its correspondent in Belgium. The *Kredietbank*, upon receiving a transfer notification from the *Deutsche Bank*, notified the *Banque d'Emission* and received from it the equivalent amount in Belgian francs. After deducting a small fee (and, when necessary, advance payments made by the Belgian public assistance system)<sup>4</sup> the *Kredietbank* remitted these sums to the Belgian assignees. No arrangements existed between the *Banque d'Emission* and Germany regarding refunds.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The information on Belgium in the following paragraphs was furnished to the I.L.O. in February 1945 by the Belgian Government.

<sup>2</sup> When the German Military Commander ordered that the clearing between Germany and Belgium should be established (10 July 1940), he stipulated that it should be handled, on the Belgian side, by the Belgian National Bank. A few weeks later (4 August 1940) he substituted the *Banque d'Emission*.

<sup>3</sup> Articles 1, 3, 4, 11 and 12 of the Order by the Military Commander in Belgium and northern France, 27 June 1940.

<sup>4</sup> See p. 164.

<sup>5</sup> A few months after the liberation of Belgium, the Belgian National Bank stated that between May 1940 and July 1944, Belgium paid out approximately 65,000 million francs in "conversion costs", 85,000 million francs for home affairs and 72,000 million francs for occupation costs, making a total of 222,000 million Belgian francs (quoted in *Bulletin of the International Federation of Trade Unions*, 1 Dec. 1944, p. 5).

The *Banque d'Emission* also furnished the money for similar payments made on behalf of Germany for Belgians working in the Todt Organisation. These transactions, however, were not carried out by the *Kredietbank*, but by the Brussels branch of a French bank, the *Banque de Paris et des Pays-Bas*. The *Banque de Paris et des Pays-Bas* had also to pay, through the German-dominated French-Belgian clearing house of the *Banque de France* (the French National Bank), the wage transfers of Belgians deported by Germany into France.<sup>1</sup> The payments made by the *Banque de Paris et des Pays-Bas* for these categories of Belgian workers were estimated at more than 2,000 million francs.

A preliminary investigation by the Belgian authorities after the liberation established that Belgium had paid out, during the German occupation, approximately 13,220 million Belgian francs under the heading of wage transfers. This sum does not include the transactions carried out by the *Banque de Paris et des Pays-Bas*. Altogether, when the Germans left, the *Banque d'Emission* showed a deficit of approximately 63,000 million francs.

As to occupied Denmark, the report of the Danish National Bank for the year 1944 showed an item of 250 million Danish crowns as wage advances for deported Danish workers among the "other obligations" listed in the clearing account with Germany.<sup>2</sup>

It should be noted that the French, Belgian and Danish figures given above are not only preliminary, but also are not intended to represent the sum total of payments made on behalf of Germany. Probably the biggest additional item, as far as the labour recruitment scheme is concerned, are the benefits and services paid in the countries of origin by the native social insurance institutions and charged to the debit of the German social insurance institutions (see Chapter XIV).

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The establishment of a currency union between Germany and certain German-occupied countries did not put the latter in a more favourable situation. For example, after a customs union had been established between Germany and the Netherlands in November 1940, a currency union between them was introduced, beginning on 1 April 1941. This did not mean that Netherlands

<sup>1</sup> Order of the Military Commander in Belgium and northern France of 10 February 1942. Before that date, these wage transfers had been handled by the German regional labour office in Brussels.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted in *Bulletin of International Federation of Trade Unions*, 1 Dec. 1944, p. 6.

currency was superseded in the Netherlands by the Reichsmark. It meant that transfers of funds could be made in limited amounts from one country to the other and could be exchanged without restriction at the fixed rate of 132.7 RM for 100 Netherlands guilders. The establishment of a currency union, accompanied by the maintenance of a separate currency and of a separate note-issuing bank, facilitated, in fact, the exploitation of the Netherlands. According to calculations by a Netherlands economist who lived in the Netherlands during the occupation, Germany's debt to the Netherlands, which included payments for goods and services, etc., amounted to approximately 500 million guilders. On 1 April 1941, when the currency union was introduced and the clearing abolished, the clearing debt of approximately 500 million guilders was cancelled, as a partial offset to the German occupation costs.

Under the currency union agreement, the Netherlands Bank (instead of the Netherlands Treasury) had to advance guilders to Netherlands exporters against their claims on Germany. The claims accumulating as a result of Netherlands export surpluses were noted on the books of the Netherlands Bank as foreign assets. In other words, the Netherlands Bank had to finance the exploitation of its own country. The President of the Bank, Dr. Trip, refused to apply this policy and resigned shortly before the currency union came into effect. He was succeeded by one of the leading Netherlands National Socialists, Marinus Rost van Tonningen, who announced that the Netherlands Bank was ready and willing to carry out the new tasks involved by collaboration in building up the "greater Germanic living space"<sup>1</sup>; since Berlin was to be the financial centre of the new "living space" the increase in the Reichsmark holdings of the Netherlands Bank (which had caused some unnecessary anxiety) represented, he maintained, a valuable credit in the Third Reich.

At the beginning of the German occupation, the foreign holdings of the Netherlands Bank amounted to 750,000 guilders; after one year under the currency union, at the end of the financial year 1941-42, they had risen to 1,204 million guilders.<sup>2</sup>

For the purpose of the present study it is important to notice that, among the payments made by the Netherlands Bank on behalf and on account of Germany, were listed the wage savings sent home by Nederlanders working in Germany. No figures are available which permit an estimate of the amount of this item.

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<sup>1</sup> Statement by Rost van Tonningen in the Annual Report of the Netherlands Bank for the year 1940-41 (June 1941).

<sup>2</sup> This figure was composed of: foreign bills: 1,129 guilders; foreign currency: 15 million guilders; and other claims: 60 million guilders.

It was however comparatively small compared with the other items, namely: payments for German purchases of goods in the Netherlands; payments to Netherlands firms working on German contracts<sup>1</sup>; investments and repayment of debts owed to the Netherlands by Germany and other countries participating in the German multilateral clearing scheme; and, finally, occupation costs.

During the financial year 1942-43 the foreign (*i.e.*, almost entirely German) assets on the books of the Netherlands Bank again more than doubled, and amounted, on 1 March 1943, to 2,221 million guilders. By June 1944, according to a statement by the Bank, they reached a total of 4,205 million guilders.

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As the war continued, the discrepancy between the relatively stable prices of rationed goods<sup>2</sup> in Germany, and the inflated prices in the German-dominated countries steadily increased. However, the official exchange rates prescribed by Germany did not reflect this development, and remained in most cases unchanged. For within the system of forced loans implicit in the multilateral clearing and currency union scheme, the maintenance of artificially low exchange rates was a matter of indifference to Germany; what counted was that the system would have become even more complicated had Germany allowed the exchange rates to vary, and that the stability of the Reichsmark as compared with the inflated currencies of the dominated countries made the Reichsmark the "safest" currency. One consequence of this policy was that, since the exchange value of the transferred wage savings did not keep pace with the inflationary trends in the workers' countries of origin, the purchasing power of these wage transfers decreased proportionately.<sup>3</sup> One of the measures envisaged in Sauckel's fifteen-point programme for the second part of 1944 was to guarantee to foreign workers a wage transfer with stable purchasing power, as

<sup>1</sup> The Central Order Office in the Hague estimated the total value of German orders placed in the Netherlands, up to May 1942, at 2,500 million RM; cf. *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, 7 Mar. 1942; *Kölnische Zeitung*, 13 June 1942.

<sup>2</sup> Under the impact of the steadily deteriorating situation, prices of non-rationed and black-market goods got out of hand towards the end of 1944 in Germany as well. *Das Schwarze Korps* wrote indignantly on 28 December 1944: "It is intolerable that the foreign black market prices, laughed at as curiosities a year ago, almost have an official hue today . . . and that the rubbish offered in department stores at shameless prices loudly proclaims the depreciation of our money". However, at that time the "transfer" scheme had lost most of its importance, because so large a part of Europe had been liberated.

<sup>3</sup> *Völkischer Beobachter*, 18 Aug. 1944.

an additional inducement to higher output.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the reconquest of more and more territory by the armies of the United Nations and the defection of Germany's allies restricted the application of the wage transfer scheme during the later stages of the war.

By October 1944, transfers to Belgium, Bulgaria, Finland, France, Rumania, the Government-General and the eastern territories had been suspended. Yet workers from these countries were officially urged to continue remitting their savings to the *Deutsche Bank* for later transfer.<sup>2</sup> It appears that in those cases in which employers made automatic deductions for wage transfers (in accordance with a clause in the labour contract) no change was made. The remittances therefore continued to flow into the *Deutsche Bank* for transfer, on the foreigners' behalf, to countries no longer within reach of the National Socialist authorities.

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Although public discussion of the system was practically impossible, some opposition to it developed in the countries affected. On 24 October 1943, the German-dominated Antwerp paper, *Volk en Staat*, published one of the extremely rare articles revealing the great concern of informed Belgian circles at Germany's ever-increasing clearing debt to Belgium:

In 1941 there was a great deal of discussion when the credit side of the clearing account amounted to some 7,000 million Belgian francs. Today our clearing credit is hardly ever mentioned, though it has risen to 44,000 million francs—a sum equivalent to more than half of our paper currency and to one third of our national debt . . . it is still growing at an ever increasing rate.

Between 1 January 1942 and October 1942 our claims rose from 7,900 million to 20,000 million—that is, by 12,000 million. In 1943, during the corresponding period, they increased from 24,000 million to 44,000 million—that is, by 20,000 million, or 165 per cent. of last year's increase.

We do not know the details of the clearing debt, that is, how much is due to delivery of goods to Germany and how much to the payment of wages of our workers in Germany. But, as the number of those workers has considerably increased since 1942, the sharp rise of Germany's debt must be attributed largely to *additional wage payments*.

The fact remains that our rapidly increasing clearing credit gravely affects business at home. Our bank of issue is now chiefly employed in paying out advances to those affected by the clearing, that is, merchants, wage earners, etc.

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<sup>1</sup> "Sauckel's 15 Punkte Programm", in *Deutsche Bergwerks-Zeitung*, 20 Aug. 1944.

<sup>2</sup> The German authorities decided that Italians working in Germany should continue to receive separation allowances even if they were not able, owing to military events, to transfer them home. According to a statement of the Commissioner-General for Manpower, the same practice was followed with respect to other nationalities (*Der Angriff*, 1 Oct. 1944).



More and more paper money has had to be issued. . . with all the corresponding price increases.

Hungary and Slovakia, in order to limit the additional burden imposed by this scheme, forbade their nationals to make remittances unless they had provided themselves with a "bank permit" from Hungary or Slovakia. The Hungarian and Slovak authorities reserved to themselves the right to examine each individual case and the German regulations provided that no Hungarian or Slovak worker was allowed to remit money to the German central clearing agency unless he was in possession of a bank permit issued by his own Government.<sup>1</sup> These efforts were not in fact very effective. According to an analysis published over a pseudonym in the summer of 1943 in a German-language Budapest paper<sup>2</sup>, the clearing assets of the Slovak National Bank (difference between total liabilities and total assets on its clearing accounts) rose from 398.2 million Slovak crowns in 1940, to 845.1 million in 1941 and 1,575.2 million in 1942. "It goes without saying", the article commented, "that the Slovak authorities, and especially the National Bank, are very anxious to decrease these high clearing assets. By far the largest part of them consist of demands on the German Reich, and it appears almost impossible for the demands to be paid within the foreseeable future."

Between early September 1943 and February 1944, while German-employed Italians continued to remit their savings to the *Deutsche Bank* for transfer, the Republican Fascist régime in northern Italy refused to pay out the equivalent sums to the families, and merely paid "advances". Considerable pressure had obviously been needed to overcome Mussolini's resistance at this point. In an Order of 5 February 1944<sup>3</sup>, Fritz Sauckel announced that new arrangements had been made between Germany and the Italian Government (meaning the Republican Fascist régime) and that, among other matters, the sums paid by the Italians in Germany since September 1943 should "now, without any delay" be made available to the Italian families *by the Italians*. He reasserted the principle that German-employed Italians could "transfer" their wage savings only through payment, via the employer, to the collective account (*Sammelkonto*) "Workers from Italy" at the *Deutsche Bank* in Berlin. The Order also forbade the transfer of any savings from wages earned before 1 July 1943. Since it limited the liabilities of the Italian funds, this provision may

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<sup>1</sup> STILLER, in *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 367.

<sup>2</sup> "M" (Bratislava): "Slovakia Fights for a Stable Currency", in *Südost Echo*, 6 Aug. 1943, p. 257.

<sup>3</sup> *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 25 Mar. 1944, Part I, p. 113.

have been a concession by the German authorities (at the expense, it is true, of the dependent families in Italy). The Turin paper *Stampa*, in an article obviously inspired by the German occupying authorities, stated early in April 1944, that Italians who went to Germany to work would be allowed to send home 60 per cent. of their earnings.

German officials occasionally referred cautiously to the growing indebtedness of the Reich and advanced various arguments to allay the concern of informed circles. One of the main arguments, addressed equally to Germany and the German-dominated countries, was that Germany's growing debt was bound to link the post-war fate of Europe even closer to the post-war fate of Germany, since only a victorious Germany would be able to settle these debts.

The methods by which the German authorities proposed to discharge German liabilities again reflected National Socialist ideology. The Reich Minister of Economic Affairs, Walter Funk, for example, speaking at Klagenfurt, Austria, in April 1942, maintained, without expressly mentioning the machinery of wage transfers, that

after the victorious conclusion of the war, the problem of war indebtedness could be solved within a relatively short period of time, because we can count on cheap labour and cheap raw materials on a large scale for the German economic system. The price of goods thus manufactured will be considerably below the general German price level. The difference thus resulting will serve to redeem our war debts and also to preserve the value of our currency. The high standard of living of the German people will thus be guaranteed.<sup>1</sup>

Later on, outright cancellation of the debt was more and more openly advocated. In the summer of 1943 Dr. Landfried, State Secretary in the Reich Ministry of Economic Affairs, outlined a scheme for dealing with the German clearing debt.<sup>2</sup> He asserted that a basic distinction must be made between clearing debts resulting from the import of commodities, and debts resulting from other sources, "in the first place, transfer remittances", payment of freights and other services rendered by foreign countries. This distinction, he argued, was highly important, because German debts for imports of commodities were largely offset by German claims for German commodities delivered to foreign countries; and although the Reich's direct trade clearing debt was greater than it would have been if German prices had risen as fast as did

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<sup>1</sup> News report, *Deutsches Nachrichten Bureau*, 25 Apr. 1942.

<sup>2</sup> "Die Clearing-Verschuldung des Reiches", in *Deutsche Bergwerks-Zeitung*, 5 Aug. 1943; cf. "Defence Expenditure Must not Burden the Clearing Balance", by a Berlin correspondent in *Stockholms-Tidningen*, 7 Aug. 1943.

those of foreign goods<sup>1</sup>, he maintained that the Reich succeeded in balancing the import of goods from most European countries by the export of German goods.<sup>2</sup>

Yet the State Secretary readily admitted that "the accounts of a number of States show balances in their favour and that they will later on be given opportunities to liquidate them through the purchase of commodities from Germany". Foreign claims resulting from wage "transfers", Dr. Landfried asserted, were not real debts. The payments made by these countries on behalf of their German-employed citizens were connected "with the full utilisation of Europe's assets for the defence of the Continent". The implication was that Germany should, in the future, collect its commercial debts ("real" debts), while the foreign countries should not insist on being compensated for their expenses in the "full utilisation of Europe's assets" for Germany's war.

At this point, Dr. Landfried was asked by the interviewer whether it would not be logical to make a clean sweep and to distinguish between clearing debts for commodities received, and clearing debts for the common European war effort, the latter including wage transfers. He was not unequivocally in favour of such a step, but asserted that the situations in the various parts

<sup>1</sup> In the winter of 1942-43, Germany established a price equalisation fund, initially endowed with 1,000 million RM, in order to bring down prices of imported goods (*13th Annual Report of the Bank for International Settlements*, Basle, autumn 1943, pp. 61, 86). Under a German-French agreement of 14 April 1942, French export prices remained free, but charges were to be levied on the difference between the free export prices and the fixed prices for the same commodities on the internal French market; the charges in question were to be credited to an equalisation fund (*caisse de péréquation*) from which subsidies were to be granted to French importers of essential German commodities (*ibid.*, p. 66).

<sup>2</sup> According to Dr. Kirchfeld, of the Foreign Trade Department in the Reich Ministry of Economic Affairs, the export and import figures were as follows:

	Million RM		— + —	Import surplus Export surplus
	Imports	Exports		
1938.....	6,050	5,620	—	430
1939.....	4,800	5,200	+	400
1940.....	5,000	4,900	—	100
1941.....	5,900	6,800	—	100
1942.....	8,700	7,600	—	1,100
1943.....	8,260	8,590	+	330

The explanation for the surprising change from an import surplus of 1,100 million RM in 1942 to an export surplus of 330 million RM in 1943, was explained by the *Economist* (London), 2 Sept. 1944 (p. 322) with three reasons: (1) the export surplus resulted largely from statistical changes made for propaganda purposes to conceal the mounting German clearing debts; (2) the figures also reflected changes in import and export prices: the latter changes, in particular, were to Germany's advantage; (3) the number of German-employed foreign workers had increased by several millions in 1943 and they produced in Germany what they would otherwise have produced at home for export to Germany. On the basis of these German figures, the *Economist* estimated that the German direct-trade clearing debt amounted at the end of 1943 to approximately 1,000 million RM.

of Europe were too different to allow a uniform procedure. He admitted, however, that if such a distinction were made, a solution would have to be found whereby the second category of debts would "cease to increase Germany's clearing indebtedness". This was a cautious reference to the possibility of cancelling Germany's debts for the foreign countries' advance payments on account of wage remittances, either by declaring those payments a contribution to the common European war effort, or by crediting them to reparation accounts. It is noteworthy that official German sources refrained from making any explicit statements concerning reparation settlements after a German victory.<sup>1</sup>

As has been said, German sources estimated that Germany's debt for foreign advance payments of wage remittances totalled 2,000 million RM by the end of 1943. This sum was small in comparison with the total national debt, estimated on 11 December 1943 at 111,000 million RM (funded) and 142,000 million RM (floating). Nevertheless, proposals for its amortisation continued to be made, on the assumption of a German victory. One of them aimed at persuading foreign countries after the war to issue internal loans for the amounts owed by Germany, and to strike the claims out of their respective budgets. Subscribers to the loan would receive priority in the delivery of German machines, quality products, etc., after the war. The loan would also be negotiable on the stock exchange.<sup>2</sup>

The settlement of the debts incurred by Germany during the war through this system of wage transfers, will obviously be one of the financial problems to be settled after the end of the war.

#### OTHER MONETARY MEASURES

German foreign exchange regulations contained a further provision which acted as an inducement to foreigners to remit to the German central exchange agency whatever they were able to save. Upon leaving Reich territory, foreign workers were as a matter of principle forbidden to take any appreciable sum with them. German regulations concerning the maximum amount a worker might take with him when returning home varied according

<sup>1</sup> For example, in a radio speech in April 1944, the Reich Minister of Finance, Schwerin von Krosigk, exhorted Germans not to worry about the increasing national debt because: (1) increase of public debt went hand in hand with decrease of private debts; (2) the debts would be largely compensated by the addition of huge fertile territories in the West and the East; and (3) the Reich debts were fundamentally a debt of the German people to itself, so that its amortisation or anyway, long-term funding, could and must be effected after the war (quoted in *Die Zeitung* (London), 21 Apr. 1944).

<sup>2</sup> *De Telegraaf* (Amsterdam), 13 July 1944, quoting an article by Reich Minister of Economic Affairs, Walter Funk, in the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*.

to nationalities. For example, in the middle of 1942 Belgians and French were forbidden to take with them any German money at all, but were permitted to cross the frontier with Belgian or French francs up to an exchange value of 300 RM. In addition, and as a special privilege, those French workers who had not transferred as much money to their families as they were authorised to do could purchase, up to the remaining amount, money orders of the *Deutsche Bank* issued in denominations of 10, 20, and 50 RM, drawn on the *Crédit Lyonnais*. These money orders were exchangeable into French francs when presented personally by the bearer at the Paris or any other French branch of the *Crédit Lyonnais*.<sup>1</sup> In an Order of 18 February 1944, Sauckel reminded employers that these wage-saving money orders could be issued only to French workers who were in possession of a special German identification card (*Bankausweis*). The Order also pointed out that difficulties had arisen because it took at least a month for the *Deutsche Bank* to issue the money orders, whereas most French workers left at very short notice.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand Bulgarians were only allowed to export 10 RM, and Finns 10 RM plus 100 Finnmarks (in coin only). By an Order of the Reich Minister for Economic Affairs, of 29 April 1943<sup>3</sup>, even Danes, who were among the most favoured labour recruits, were forbidden to take with them upon their return more than 10 RM in Danish currency.

The *Völkischer Beobachter* stated in February 1944 that "guest workers are also interested in a German victory, because they have left savings in Germany which can acquire purchasing power only if the European economy is organised for peace after the victory".<sup>4</sup>

In the spring of 1944, an Order by the Reich Minister of Economic Affairs allowed Italian workers to take 5 RM with them only if they promised to return to Germany to work. Otherwise they were not allowed to take any money at all.<sup>5</sup>

Returning foreign workers were warned again and again that any violation of the regulations would result in confiscation of the money found on them and that they would also be liable to punishment. They were further warned that they would have no opportunity to exchange German money into their own currency, either at the frontier or in their own countries. These provisions and the favourable rate of exchange granted by the official German clearing exchange agency all served as further inducements to foreigners to remit as much money as possible to the agency.

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<sup>1</sup> *Ausländische Arbeiter*, pp. 385 et seq.

<sup>2</sup> *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 25 Mar. 1944, Part I, p. 114.

<sup>3</sup> *Idem*, No. 15, 25 May 1943, Part I, p. 302.

<sup>4</sup> Quoted in *Die Zeitung* (London), 25 Feb. 1944, p. 11.

<sup>5</sup> *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 1944, Part V, p. 98.

From the standpoint of this report, the most far-reaching and significant of the various currency reforms and monetary schemes were those introduced in the German-occupied parts of the Ukraine. The Germans first created a special banking institution called the "Ukrainian Bank", which was empowered to issue its own banknotes (Order of 5 March 1942). The principal officials of the Ukrainian Bank and many of its employees were Germans. By Order of 5 July 1942 the "karbowanez" was introduced as the new monetary unit, and made the only legal tender. All roubles had to be exchanged for karbowanez. However, "from motives of monetary policy" the Germans ordered that at first rouble notes in circulation, except the smallest denominations, should not actually be exchanged into karbowanez notes, but that special accounts should be opened for persons handing in rouble notes. By Order of the Reich Commissioner of 1 December 1942, that is, five months after the population had been compelled to hand in their rouble notes for exchange, amounts up to 150 roubles were allowed to be paid out in karbowanez to the owners of these special accounts. It was officially declared that the remaining sums would "be paid at a later date".<sup>1</sup> These measures amounted to "freezing" all funds and to depriving the Ukrainian population of the use of their individual and collective savings. The policy thus exerted additional pressure on the Ukrainians to accept employment in Germany.

No information is available on the measures taken by Germany concerning wage transfers in the period of the war when the military successes of the United Nations were increasingly separating the Reich from the countries of its foreign labour recruits. But on the basis of the available information on Germany's economic situation in that stage of the war, it can safely be assumed that, owing to the acute shortage of consumer goods, foreign workers in the better income brackets were not able and were not allowed to spend the income left to them after payment of board, taxes and social insurance contributions. At least as far as workers recruited in the formerly occupied Soviet territories are concerned, there are indications that parts of their earnings were still deducted and deposited with the Central Clearing Office (for transfer at a later date). If, however, the transfer arrangements were abandoned, foreign workers, owing to the shortage of consumer goods, were forced either to keep their savings themselves, or to deposit them in German banks or savings institutions. Under the general German exchange control regulations, these accounts were blocked, which meant that no funds drawn from them could be sent beyond the

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<sup>1</sup> Report of the German Reichsbank for 1942.

frontier, either in German or in other currency. Even before military events cut off foreign workers from their own countries, some of them deposited their wage savings in blocked accounts in German banks and savings institutions; upon their return home, they were forbidden to take these savings with them across the frontier.<sup>1</sup> It is therefore to be expected that at the end of the war, large sums of money will be distributed over many accounts in German banks and savings institutions throughout Germany and its annexed territories.

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<sup>1</sup> For exceptions for French workers, see p. 180.

## CHAPTER XIII

### MEASURES TO COUNTERACT FOREIGNERS' RESISTANCE

When the Germans initiated their recruiting drive they hoped that at least many workers coming from the less developed regions of Europe would find the conditions offered to them in Germany better than those at home, or that they would be impressed by the size and efficiency of the German war effort. On the other hand, the Third Reich offered to certain industrial countries, particularly to France, the inducement of absorbing the unemployed. Much was always made of the promise that the remittances which German-employed workers would send home would improve the situation of their families.

However, the expectation that, for these and other reasons, a considerable portion of the labour recruits would be converted to the German cause was not fulfilled. There was continual and increasing opposition among the millions of foreign workers compelled to contribute to the German war effort, mostly against their will and mostly under very unfavourable conditions.

Opposition took many forms. The continuous struggle of the foreign populations against the German labour drives culminated, to mention two outstanding examples, in France in the formation of the Maquis, and in Yugoslavia in the strengthening of the Yugoslav patriot army. Anti-collaborationists invented various devices to slow down the work of the recruitment agencies, *e.g.*, the insertion of false information in official blank forms, deluging officials with time-wasting questions, making the most of language difficulties, and destroying files and documents of the labour offices.<sup>1</sup> Recruiting officials were often ambushed and killed.<sup>2</sup> In Germany

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<sup>1</sup> In isolated cases the German authorities decided to stop or interrupt the recruitment of small groups of foreign workers when difficulties became too great. For example, in November 1942, the Commissioner-General for Manpower informed all German labour offices and regional labour offices that "the recruitment of Greek workers for the Reich territories was to be stopped at that date, since the use of Greek workers in the Reich had, for climatic reasons, led to difficulties" (Circular of 7 November 1942; *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, Part I, p. 519).

<sup>2</sup> For instance, between 5 April and 10 May 1943 eight officials in occupied Poland were killed, among them the Chief of the Warsaw Labour Office, Hoffman, (Footnote continued overleaf)



the opposition of deported workers took many forms, culminating in acts of sabotage and desertion.

In isolated cases, the opposition of foreign workers was officially acknowledged, as when *Das Schwarze Korps*, the organ of the S.S., wrote<sup>1</sup> that "in Germany, millions of foreigners move around who cannot be counted among our most cordial friends", or when, discussing the labour supply for the 1942 harvest, *Arbeitseinsatz und Arbeitslosenhilfe* stated editorially that "the importation of workers from the Government-General and the eastern territories as well as from other countries met at first with considerable difficulties". However, "the hatred revealed by our adversaries' campaign against our measures proves better than anything else that we are on the right road".<sup>2</sup> In an address to all labour allocation services of Greater Germany, Fritz Sauckel declared that his administration was determined to "carry out with German thoroughness whatever order our incomparable and most beloved Führer Adolf Hitler may give us, so as to meet all the demands of war. . . Let the enemies of National Socialist Greater Germany, that is, the plutocrats, the Jews, and the Bolshevik-Stalinist cliques, hate us even more than they do already. It is only an honour and our greatest reason for pride." On 25 February 1943, Dr. Sauckel for the first time openly denounced "trouble-makers, agitators and malicious saboteurs, and reactionary and Red Front persons among the foreign workers" and spoke of "malicious persons who, though their number is infinitesimal, want to disturb the peace of German factories".<sup>3</sup> In order to suppress this opposition, the authorities made systematic use of the wide range of methods put at their disposal by the National Socialist régime. The longer the war lasted, the more were all these types of pressure applied.

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his deputy, Dietz, and a leading Gestapo agent, Geist. At the end of June, Kurt Ritter, a high official, was killed at the German Labour Office of Skierniewice. Wilhelm Kube, one of the chief organisers of the mass deportations from White Russia, and Julius Ritter, who performed similar functions in France, were killed on 21 and 28 September 1943 respectively. During the war, the Reich Minister of Labour, Franz Seldte, published in every issue of the official gazette of the Reich Ministry of Labour, the *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, a list of war death casualties among the officials of the labour administration service who were in the armed forces or the S.S. These lists distinguished between officials who had "died in action" (*gefallen*), who had "died" (*verstorben*), who had "died of wounds" (*infolge Verwundung verstorben*), and who had "met with a fatal accident" (*tödlich verunglückt*). There is no indication whether these lists included officials killed or wounded while discharging their duties in the labour administration.

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in *Sydsvenska Dagbladet*, 3 Dec. 1942.

<sup>2</sup> Reprinted in *Arbeitseinsatz und Arbeitslosenhilfe*, Jan. 1943, p. 9.

<sup>3</sup> Reprinted in *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 7, 5 Mar. 1943, Part I, p. 136. If the propaganda was aimed at the German population, harsh treatment of foreigners was explained as a socialist measure. Thus, Professor Heinrich HUNKER wrote in *Deutsche Volkswirtschaft* (1943, No. 4, p. 98): "Every social consideration which after the war would be deemed indispensable but which today would deprive the front of a single man or would weaken our armament, is unsocialistic".

In Germany, control of civilian workers—apart from supervision by employers and German foremen—was in the hands of the German Labour Front, the camp commanders, the camp and factory guards, the ordinary police and the political police (Gestapo). Some categories of foreign workers were also controlled by supervisors of their own nationality. Officials of the Labour Front supervised and controlled all aspects of the foreigners' lives, including their accommodation, canteens, transportation to and from work, and spare-time activities. The regulations expressly stated that this supervision was not restricted to foreigners housed in mass accommodation, but extended to those who lived in private residences.<sup>1</sup> In particular, it was the duty of the Labour Front to keep a continuous check on the labour output of foreign workers and the state of their morale.

The Labour Front, with its wide ramifications, mainly exercised administrative control. Wherever there were considerable numbers of foreign labourers actual physical policing was done by factory and camp guards. These guards, who were often armed, had to be supplied by the plants, but were trained by officials of the German Labour Front, under whose control they remained while on duty.<sup>2</sup>

#### SUPERVISION BY FOREIGN DELEGATES

The German authorities encouraged the supervision of foreign workers by delegates from their own countries. As Dr. Mende, head of the Office for Labour Allocation of the German Labour Front, wrote in October 1942<sup>3</sup>, "foreign groups and organisations which are ready to collaborate are being increasingly asked to do so in connection with the allocation of foreign workers". He defined three methods of organising this supervision: the grant of increased authority to foreign consuls; the exercise by foreign authorities of their own system of supervision over their fellow countrymen; and a system of collaboration between German and foreign agencies, with the Germans in the leading position. The first method could not be used because "the Labour Front is unable to control and supervise foreign consuls, owing to their special legal position". But it was considered desirable to make large use of foreign supervisors, provided that they acted "under the leadership and direction of the German Labour Front". Within this framework the foreign representatives "enjoy a considerable amount of autonomy".

<sup>1</sup> *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 204.

<sup>2</sup> *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 25 July 1942, Part I, p. 332.

<sup>3</sup> "Ausländer betreuen ausländische Arbeiter", in *Monatshefte für NS-Sozialpolitik*, Oct. 1942, pp. 175 *et seq.*

A first experiment was made in the summer of 1938, when officials of the Fascist Federation of Italian Labour (*C.F.L.I.*) were sent to Germany to supervise Italian workers in Germany, in co-operation with the Labour Front. The Labour Front later concluded similar agreements with foreign Governments or organisations, establishing uniform rules for the control of their respective nationals. In these cases it was agreed that "a major portion of the fees paid by foreign workers to the German Labour Front shall be transferred to the foreign supervisory agencies, or otherwise be used for the benefit of the foreigners".<sup>1</sup>

Subject always to overriding control by the German Labour Front, the foreign delegates were permitted to exercise supervision at three levels:

- (a) at the Head Office of the German Labour Front;
- (b) at the *Gau* administration (regional offices) of the German Labour Front;
- (c) in the camps and plants.

According to the directives issued to foreign delegates the second form of supervision was the most important. In the autumn of 1942, the *Gau* liaison delegates (*Gauverbindungsleute*) had to fulfil the following functions:

assist the German Labour Front in the supervision of foreign workers and in the solution of their collective problems in the plants and camps; contribute to the establishment of good relations between the German population and the foreigners; stimulate the foreigners' zeal and output; and influence them by education to maintain order and discipline.

For these purposes the *Gau* liaison delegates were permitted, always under the control of the Labour Front, to keep in direct contact with foreign workers through letters, consultation hours at their own offices, and visits to plants and camps; and indirectly, through contact with the local foreign delegates, who transmitted workers' complaints to the *Gau* delegates, and relayed the answers.

In these consultations any "legal information" upon workers' rights or duties, or any instructions concerning their behaviour at or out of work were to be given only with the consent of the

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<sup>1</sup> Felix Lennholm, a Dane, appointed by the Germans as chief representative of Danish workers in Germany, with headquarters in Copenhagen, asserted that as from 1 January 1942, his organisation, the *Danske Tysklandarbejderes Forening*, had become "autonomous". It had Danish liaison officers in Germany to keep in contact with Danish workers and to safeguard their interests. It also helped the families of absent workers by advancing money. According to Felix Lennholm, the German Labour Front paid over to his organisation the fees received from Danish workers. Membership of the organisation was open to Danes working in Germany and cost 2 Danish crowns a year (*Fædrelandet*, 27 Apr. 1942).

Labour Front in every individual case. Foreign delegates, Mende pointed out, might otherwise give information or instructions incompatible with German orders and thus cause unrest in the plants. Similarly, foreign delegates visiting plants or camps might meet the German employer only in the presence of Labour Front representatives. Such visits could therefore be arranged only with the Labour Front's permission, but on these occasions foreign delegates were allowed to talk undisturbed with their fellow countrymen.

On 26 March 1942, the "Service for French Labour in Germany" (*Service de la main d'œuvre française en Allemagne*) was created under the auspices of the Vichy Government. By order of Marshal Pétain of 7 February 1943, the organisation ranked as a "General Commissariat", under Commissioner-General G. Bruneton.<sup>1</sup> It was the "only recognised body" for watching the interests of French workers in Germany and their families in France. For this purpose it created a network of delegations both in Germany and France. It was constructed on the "leadership" principle; its delegates possessed "complete autonomy" and were responsible only to their superiors in the organisation.<sup>2</sup> In an official manual issued in 1943, the Commissariat defined its functions. It "does not intervene in any way in the selection of the persons to depart for Germany. Its social functions begin when the French workers have been placed in German industry either through the general interdepartmental labour commissariat, which is responsible for selecting young persons for compulsory labour service, or in accordance with requisition orders from the German authorities."<sup>3</sup>

One of the duties of the Commissariat was to discuss with the Labour Front or the German employer any dispute arising from the French workers' labour contracts. For this purpose, it appointed plant delegates (*délégués d'entreprise*) in German firms employing more than 20 Frenchmen and regional delegates in the district (*Gau*) capital. The general delegate was attached to the central German authorities in Berlin.<sup>4</sup> The Commissariat also controlled all French charitable and self-help organisations set up for the benefit of French deportees. In France, it organised various social services for the families who were left behind.

The extent of this collaboration should not be underestimated. A Swiss report<sup>5</sup> stated that 15 European countries maintained offices in Germany for liaison with the German authorities. On 19

<sup>1</sup> Commissariat général à la main d'œuvre française en Allemagne (Etat français): *Le Travail en Allemagne et la famille* (Paris, 1943), p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Act No. 79 of 6 February 1943; *Journal officiel*, 7 Feb. 1943, p. 363.

<sup>3</sup> Commissariat général, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 63.

<sup>5</sup> *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 27 Aug. 1943.

October 1943, at a meeting of the chief foreign officials (*Reichsgauverbindungs männer*) attached to the German Labour Front, a high official announced that more than 500 non-German officials held important positions in the Labour Front, with many more working as liaison officers in the camps and plants.<sup>1</sup>

In the spring of 1944, when Germany had lost most of the eastern territories, Alfred Rosenberg's Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories opened a "Central Agency for Easterners" (*Zentralstelle für Angehörige der Völker des Ostens*). Official German propaganda compared this agency to a consulate for the "several million workers who had come to Germany from the distant steppes".<sup>2</sup>

#### SPOKESMEN AND COLLABORATORS

The same reasons which led the authorities of the Third Reich to encourage the collaboration of foreign delegates, also caused the appointment of "spokesmen" from among the foreign workers themselves. If a German undertaking employed 20 or more foreigners (wage earners or salaried employees) of the same nationality, the German Labour Front could nominate foreign spokesmen (*ausländische Betriebsverbindungs männer*).<sup>3</sup> Interpreters were eligible for the post, but an official commentary points out that personality was more important than knowledge of German, which was not therefore a requirement.

For the supervision of workers from Bohemia and Moravia, a central "Czecho-Moravian Liaison Office" (*Böhmisch-Mährische Verbindungsstelle*) was set up in Berlin.<sup>4</sup> Its staff, called guardians (*Betreuer*) or liaison officers (*Reichsverbindungs männer*) were under the jurisdiction of the Commissioner-General for Manpower. There were several regional offices and a number of branch agencies, distributed over the territory of the old Reich, Austria and the German-annexed parts of western Poland. They had to "assist the German Labour Front by advice and action in arranging for the care of Czech workers".<sup>5</sup> The whole organisation was designed to increase control over these workers, and at the same time to facilitate the activities of the German Labour Front. Before a Czech was allowed to consult a liaison officer, he had first to obtain per-

<sup>1</sup> *Völkischer Beobachter*, 20 Oct. 1943, quoted in *Neue Internationale Rundschau der Arbeit*, fourth quarter, 1944, p. 36.

<sup>2</sup> *Kölnische Zeitung*, 3 Apr. 1944.

<sup>3</sup> BIRKENHOLZ, in *Ausländische Arbeiter*, supplement, 5 Nov. 1942, pp. 204 (2) et seq.

<sup>4</sup> Czechoslovak Ministry of Social Welfare (London): *Czechoslovak Workers in Germany* (confidential report, London, Dec. 1943), Part I, pp. 7-8, quoting *Der Neue Tag* (Prague), 16 Apr. 1943.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, quoting *Narodni Prace*, 10 Apr. 1943.

mission from the camp leader, who was always an official of the German Labour Front.

After the expulsion of the Germans from France, collaborationist Frenchmen who had taken refuge in Germany were systematically encouraged to intensify propaganda against the United Nations among French deportees. Similar use was made of refugee collaborators from other countries.<sup>1</sup> For example, early in January 1945, a "Greek National Committee" was formed in the Reich, under the former Greek Deputy Prime Minister Hector Tsiornikos. It was to "look after Greek national interests and the many Greek workers in Germany".<sup>2</sup> A Decree of 19 January 1945 by the Mussolini Government created a new "Fascist Republican Ministry of Labour"; soon afterwards, the labour offices in northern Italy (whose main task was to conscript workers for Germany) were put under the control of a newly organised Italian "General Confederation of Labour, Technicians and the Arts", which also took over, temporarily, the care of the "Italian Labour Abroad" organisation.

#### COERCION AND PUNISHMENT

National Socialist criminal and police law differed from the laws of democratic countries in seven main respects. Each of these differences in itself markedly decreased the personal liberty and legal rights of the individual; and in their cumulative effect they concentrated so much uncontrolled and arbitrary power in the hands of the authorities that the individual lost the rights of a free man.

(1) The penal code and a vast mass of statutes, orders, and regulations established a system of excessively rigorous punishment. National Socialist opinion openly regarded the "pitiless" administration of the harshest possible penal system as essential to the stability of the régime. The régime therefore abandoned principles that had been regarded as unquestionable and elementary, such as the abolition of torture, the equality of all men before the law, the right of the accused to have access to evidence, his right to avail himself of the services of a lawyer, the guarantee of minimum rights to convicted persons, and the greatest possible restriction of capital punishment.

(2) No clear distinction existed between private law offences and criminal acts. National Socialist penal law, for example, made it a criminal offence for a worker to refuse to fulfil his duty, or to

<sup>1</sup> *Das Schwarze Korps* (official organ of the S.S.) wrote on 4 January 1945: "The émigrés from France, Flanders, Wallonia and Holland are not really émigrés, but the vanguard of the new times. They did not fight against, but for, Germany; they are persecuted because they were 'collaborationists'."

<sup>2</sup> *Transocean News Agency*, 9 Jan. 1945.

slow down his work, if such behaviour on his part was deemed due to malicious intent. In the summer of 1942<sup>1</sup> the law was made even more rigorous. It was declared to be a criminal offence for a foreign worker to "refuse to fulfil his duty" or to "slow down his work in a manner incompatible with his duties", whether such behaviour was dictated by malicious intent or not.<sup>2</sup>

(3) One and the same act, according to National Socialist practice, could be punished by the police as well as by the courts.<sup>3</sup> Even before the war it was an established practice that acquittal in a court of law need not prevent the Gestapo from taking action. As a matter of principle, "gypsies, foreigners or persons hostile to the State" who had been acquitted by the courts or had served their sentences had to be handed over to the Gestapo. The Gestapo then decided whether they were to be taken into "protective custody"<sup>4</sup>, which, as a rule, meant detention in a concentration camp.

(4) The criminal and police laws were very vaguely worded and thus left an enormous range of discretion to the individual German authority. The democratic concept of the rule of law tends, in penal matters, to protect the individual by careful limitation of the discretionary powers of the law courts and of administrative and police tribunals. The National Socialist system continuously widened these discretionary powers. The Act of 28 June 1935<sup>5</sup> formally removed from the penal code the principle of *nulla poena sine lege*, and permitted the courts to punish acts, not declared punishable by the law, which the courts deemed deserving of punishment according to "healthy popular feeling".<sup>6</sup>

The general rule permitting persons to be punished for acts which were not prohibited was supplemented after the first great victories in the West, when the principle of retroactivity was extended to all political crimes against the German State or German officials committed at any time *before* that date, even though committed abroad and by citizens of foreign countries. Even "mali-

<sup>1</sup> Decree by the Commissioner-General for Manpower, of 20 July 1942; *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 93, supplement, 30 Aug. 1942.

<sup>2</sup> Under the same Decree, foreigners demanding more payment than that officially prescribed for them were declared liable to fines up to an unlimited amount or to imprisonment up to six weeks (as were employers who yielded to such demands, or who hired, or made efforts to hire, a foreigner engaged by another German employer).

<sup>3</sup> Certain categories of foreign workers were under the exclusive jurisdiction of the Gestapo (see e.g., for domestic workers, p. 155), or of special military or police courts martial (see p. 194).

<sup>4</sup> Regulations by the Reich Ministry of Justice, 13 April 1935.

<sup>5</sup> *Reichsgesetzblatt*, Part I, p. 839.

<sup>6</sup> "Whoever commits an act which the law declares punishable or which is deserving of punishment according to the fundamental principle of a penal law and according to healthy popular feeling, shall be punished. Where no specific penal law applies directly to the act, it shall be punished according to the law the basic principle of which is best suited to it."

cious or provocative utterances against leading personalities of the State or the National Socialist German Labour Party"<sup>1</sup> were punishable under this provision.

(5) When penal or administrative proceedings were instituted, the legal rights of the accused were reduced to a minimum; the guarantees of a fair trial were largely abolished, and there was no trial by jury. Reliable sources reported many cases of summary procedure against foreigners which bore no resemblance to any orderly administration of justice.

(6) All action taken by the Gestapo and all "political" action taken by the ordinary police were exempt from judicial review. This principle was firmly established before the outbreak of the war.<sup>2</sup>

(7) Apart from court and police action, there was the system of punishment by detention in "corrective labour camps" or "compulsory labour camps". Large numbers of foreigners employed in Germany, who were considered recalcitrant but had not committed punishable acts, were sentenced to "corrective" or "compulsory" labour. For example, at the end of 1942, the Commissioner-General for Manpower ordered that "in cases of contravention against discipline" workers could be "removed to a labour camp, a correctional camp, or a concentration camp".<sup>3</sup> It should be noted that "contraventions against discipline" referred to acts which the National Socialist penal system itself did not regard as criminal offences or misdemeanours. Hence removal to any of these camps was not considered as a criminal procedure in the technical sense. All these actions were taken without trial.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> William EBENSTEIN: *The Nazi State* (New York, Farrar and Rinehart, 1943), pp. 73-74.

<sup>2</sup> No Federal Act was ever passed establishing the Gestapo. Prussia was the only German State in which the Gestapo was established by law (Act of 26 April 1933). A Prussian Act of 10 February 1936 provided: "The orders and activities of the Secret State Police are not subject to review in the administrative courts". A few weeks later, the Supreme Administrative Court of Prussia ruled that actions of the ordinary police were also exempt from judicial review, if they fell within the province of the Gestapo. (Franz SCHOLZ: "Die neue Rechtsprechung des Preussischen Oberverwaltungsgerichts", in *Verwaltungsarchiv*, (1936), p. 417. See also Werner LEHMANN: "Der alte und der neue Polizeibegriff", in *Rechtswissenschaftliche Studien*, edited by Prof. F. ANDRÉ and others, No. 63 (Berlin, 1937), quoted by William EBENSTEIN, *op. cit.*, p. 77.) This precedent was universally followed. On 10 February 1938, the principle was also expressed in statutory form (cf. Superior Judge Dr. SCHÜLLY: "Die neue Rechtsprechung des Badischen Verwaltungsgerichtshofs", in *Verwaltungsarchiv* (1940), p. 77, quoted by EBENSTEIN, *op. cit.*).

<sup>3</sup> Order of 21 December 1942; *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 1943, Part I, p. 56.

<sup>4</sup> In the spring of 1944, documents from German penitentiary camps fell into the hands of the Danish "underground" paper *Frit Danmark*. They dealt with 20 cases which the paper called typical. Sixteen inmates died in the camps of Liebenau on the Weser Farge near Bremen, special camp No. 21 in Watenstedt, Oberlanzendorf in Lower Austria and in the Dachau concentration camps. Two were freed and repatriated to Denmark by the Danish Consulate General in Hamburg; one walked with two crutches and the other, who had lost 52 lbs., was unlikely ever to recover from the effects of his stay in the camp.



Employers were instructed that "information concerning foreigners' disloyalty at work" must be forwarded to the Gestapo (information of a similar character against German workers had to be forwarded to the head of the labour office, who acted as a deputy for the Reich labour trustee).<sup>1</sup>

Neither the Gestapo nor the other branches of the German police published their own rules and instructions. One of the few rules that was made public (because it was issued by the Reich Minister of Labour, and not by the Reich Minister of the Interior or the Reich Leader of the German Police) stated that if a foreign worker was sentenced to gaol by the police he must not be released at the end of his sentence unless the necessary arrangements for his return to his place of employment had been completed.<sup>2</sup>

Soviet workers were subject to the most cruel system of punishment. A confidential instruction issued by Reich Marshal Göring, after a secret conference held in Berlin on 7 November 1941, ordered that the decisive consideration in measures for the maintenance of order among Soviet workers in Germany should be swiftness and severity. Only the following varieties of punishment should be applied, without intermediate grades: deprivation of food, and the death penalty by decision of court martial.<sup>3</sup>

It should be noted that this instruction speaks of the maintenance of order and is not confined to crimes in the legal sense. Göring's instruction, as well as a great number of similar directives, was designed to notify the officials in control of Soviet deportees that they were authorised, and indeed expected, to use methods of indiscriminate violence. Reports from all regions where Soviet labour recruits were put to work are unanimous that they were whipped, lashed, otherwise corporally maltreated, and even shot, without the formality of a court martial.

It must also be remembered that before their arrival at their places of work foreign workers had undergone persecution in their own countries<sup>4</sup>, and that their treatment on the way to Germany had usually been appalling.

<sup>1</sup> *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 6, 1943, Part V, p. 105. The Order expressly provided that the Gestapo was to handle cases of "disloyalty at work" not only in the case of foreign citizens but also in the case of workers "of foreign extraction or *Volksstum* whose home is in Germany, such as Poles or Czechs".

<sup>2</sup> Decree of 14 March 1941; *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 164.

<sup>3</sup> Quoted in "Note by V. M. Molotov, People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs of the U.S.S.R., on the mass forcible abduction of peaceful Soviet citizens to German-Fascist slavery and on the responsibility for this crime of German authorities and private persons who exploit the forced labour of Soviet citizens in Germany", 11 May 1943 (*Information Bulletin*, Embassy of the U.S.S.R., Washington, 15 May 1943, p. 2).

<sup>4</sup> A long list of such acts, and of the official German decrees ordering them, is contained, e.g., in Mr. Molotov's Note to the ambassadors and envoys of all countries with which the U.S.S.R. had diplomatic relations, of 27 April 1942 (*Information Bulletin*, Embassy of the U.S.S.R., Washington, 1942).

In many respects, Poles were treated little better than Soviet workers. A Pole, Edward Sobbowiak, who, when arrested during a German "police raid against idle Poles", resisted his captors and attempted to escape, was sentenced to death for using violence against German officials.<sup>1</sup> A 21-year old Pole, Edmund Graczylowski, was shot for "economic sabotage" because he had injured two horses and one cow belonging to his German master<sup>2</sup>, and Michael Lason, probably a Pole, was shot for having "assaulted his employer".<sup>3</sup> In the summer of 1944, a Special Court at Königsberg sentenced to death a "racial German" named Zielski, because some of the Polish workers to whom he had issued leave certificates attesting that they behaved well and could be expected to return, had not in fact returned.<sup>4</sup>

The fundamental German attitude was shown by Greiser's statement of policy made at the opening of the *Gau* Chamber of Economics at Łódź<sup>5</sup>:

As in the past four years . . . we shall continue to handle the Polish labourer in accordance with the rules laid down in 1939; he will receive hard but just treatment . . . Employers must get the maximum amount of work out of the Poles. They must be just, but as a rule the exploitation of the workman must be as rational and economical as if he were coal or power.

But while the most ruthless methods of punishment and terror were used on an enormous scale in the Soviet Union and in Poland, acts of similar cruelty were also committed by the German authorities, though less systematically, against citizens of other countries. While a Dutchman, H. W. van der Maden, received only three months' imprisonment for failing to appear before a medical board which was to decide whether he should be recruited for work in Germany<sup>6</sup>, a 29-year old Dane, Ejler Lorentzen, who, while under arrest, "tried to escape and assaulted a guard", was sentenced to death by a special Hamburg court.<sup>7</sup> Three Frenchmen received long sentences of hard labour because they had penetrated (apparently to find some food) into the pantry in the basement of the barracks.<sup>8</sup> Death sentences were inflicted for minor offences, for example, on a Croat who stole a travelling bag<sup>9</sup>, on a Czech found guilty of listening to and spreading foreign

<sup>1</sup> *Ostdeutscher Beobachter*, Poznan, 2 Nov. 1942.

<sup>2</sup> *Deutsche Rundschau*, Bydoczsz, 13 July 1942.

<sup>3</sup> *Breslauer Neueste Nachrichten*, 11 July 1942.

<sup>4</sup> *Preussische Zeitung*, 28 July 1944.

<sup>5</sup> *Ostdeutscher Beobachter* (Poznan), 21 Aug. 1943.

<sup>6</sup> *De Tijd*, 20 May 1942.

<sup>7</sup> *Dagens Nyheter* (Stockholm), 16 Oct. 1942.

<sup>8</sup> *Die Weltwoche* (Zurich), 4 Sept. 1942.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

broadcasts<sup>1</sup>, and on two Frenchmen, a 26-year old typesetter, G. Berthé, and 23-year old J. Musilli, for having forged butter coupons<sup>2</sup>, and two "civilian foreign workers", probably Greeks, for having stolen food coupons on 23 occasions and sold them at excessive prices.<sup>3</sup> These are a few examples, chosen at random.

In the autumn of 1943, when the Soviet armies were moving towards Poland, Governor-General Frank issued an Order, to come into force on 10 October 1943, which threatened non-Germans (except citizens of countries which were allied, or not at war, with Germany) with the death penalty for *any* infringement of laws or regulations if committed with the intention of hindering or disturbing "German constructive efforts". The death penalty was the only punishment provided. The courts martial of the Security Police were granted complete discretion to determine the procedure to be followed at these trials.<sup>4</sup>

In fact, the German police and S.S. officials were given a monopoly of trying foreigners in various German-occupied countries. As early as 17 September 1941, for example, the Commissioner for the Occupied Norwegian Territories introduced the penalty of forced labour, and, in serious cases, the death penalty, for any person who disorganised or endangered the national economy and industrial peace through strike or lockout, or damage or sabotage of works or equipment, or the incitement of others, or wilful reduction of output, or any other action; in addition, part or all of his property might be confiscated. The administration of this Order was entrusted to the German "Northern S.S. and Police Court".<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Sentence by the Provincial Court of Schwerin, Mecklenburg, of 23 August 1943 (*Das Rundfunkarchiv*, 3rd quarter, 1943). A German woman clerk in a Leipzig post office was sentenced to death for having connived at, and even participated in, thefts of clothing, foodstuffs, and goods committed by foreign women sorters working under her supervision (*Leipziger Neueste Nachrichten*, 6 Dec. 1944). A German in Saarbrücken was sentenced to death for repeatedly listening to British broadcasts and passing on the reports to foreign workers (*Deutsches Nachrichten Bureau*, 2 Feb. 1945).

<sup>2</sup> Sentence by a Special Court in Berlin (*Berliner Lokalanzeiger*, 28 Jan. 1945).

<sup>3</sup> Sentence by Vienna Special Court (*Völkischer Beobachter*, Vienna edition, 15 Nov. 1944).

<sup>4</sup> See *Verordnungsblatt für das Generalgouvernement*, 9 Oct. 1943, p. 589.

<sup>5</sup> *Verordnungsblatt für die besetzten Norwegischen Gebiete*, No. 8, 18 Sept. 1941 (cf. *International Labour Review*, Vol. XLV, No. 3, Mar. 1942, p. 318). By Order of 19 March 1941, the Reich Commissioner for the Occupied Netherlands Territories delegated to the head of the S.S. absolute legislative power. The Order stipulated that "in so far as necessary for the fulfilment of his duties, the Superior S.S. and Police Chief may issue rules and regulations having the force and effect of laws". He himself was, however, not to be bound by his own law; the Order also provided that "in the fulfilment of his duties, the Superior S.S. and Police Chief may deviate from existing regulations". Similarly, the "special agents" appointed by the Reich Commissioner for the areas under the jurisdiction of the police courts martial were exempt from the law: "In the fulfilment of his duties, the special agent shall not be bound by law" (*Verordnungsblatt für die besetzten Niederländischen Gebiete*, No. 11, 20 Mar. 1941, p. 190).

## DIVERGENT TRENDS IN GERMAN LABOUR POLICY

Since the Geneva Convention of 1929 concerning the treatment of prisoners of war does not apply to civilians, the International Red Cross Committee was not in a position to inspect their conditions of life and employment. It is not yet known whether any investigation of the treatment of foreign civilian workers in Germany was made by neutral commissions or other bodies during the war. The German authorities in July 1942 arranged a conducted tour for foreign broadcasters and journalists to the Junker Aeroplane Factories in Dessau in July 1942. One of the invited group was Gösta F. Block, who volunteered to fight for Germany in the First World War and between February and September 1942 was director of the Swedish-language broadcasts from the German broadcasting station in Königsberg. Block reported upon his visit to Dessau on 27 July 1942, in a book, *Tyksland Inifrån*. He had seen

. . . Russians standing at the machines, of ages from 15 up to at least 40. They were all dressed in the blue overall of the factory with the word "Ost" embroidered on the breast . . . Most of them pattered about in bare feet on the cement floor. Once they have worn out what they brought from home there is nothing they can do but go barefoot both at work and in their spare time . . . foreign women workers had nothing to remark about their work and the instructions, but the food and lodging and the treatment outside their work was considered unsatisfactory, a view which was shared by all of them, whether women or men, young or old, married or unmarried. This is very understandable, since in their work the foreigners are brought together with representatives of the good-natured German working people who even today deserve both respect and affection, while in their lodgings and outside their work they are brought together with specimens of the present German ruling class, big noises in national socialism of various classes and shades, mostly the worst . . . All this applies not only to Russians of both sexes, but to all workers, whether "allied", "occupied" or "neutral".

. . . Then the food! How badly off these Russians were for food was a thing of which we saw proof. Some of them went round with spoons in the canteen and collected what other people left. They scraped the tin containers in which the food was brought into the canteens so carefully that the tin was in danger.

Mr. Block goes on to say that the foreign radio reporters were invited to try the food of the workers and that, for this reason, the food on the day of their visit was better than usual. Even so, some of the visitors could not eat it:

Not even the barrels in which the more fastidious visitors threw what they could not manage to swallow were safe from these hungry "voluntary" *Arbeitsgäste* in the Third Reich! It was a wretched sight.

According to the same writer, bad treatment was given not only to workers who had been conscripted through direct coercion, but also to foreign volunteers who

. . . were driven by unemployment, hunger and much else at home to make

their way to Germany. To treat these unfortunate fragments of peoples turned loose from their surroundings as though they were convicts cannot be defended nor can it be explained by any other term than sadism and brutality. I will not here go into details, but the blue marks, which both men and women showed to us radio people, had not come of their own accord. Neither had they made them themselves in order to supply us with evidence, for they did not know that we were coming.

. . . I myself and my Dutch and Rumanian colleagues were eye-witnesses of how the *Werkschutz* (factory guards) in the open street maltreated a foreign voluntary civilian worker. We happened to walk with a representative of the works from one part of the factory to another and passed through a small cluster of villas. There we met a column of workers, probably Russians, guarded by two uniformed Germans on bicycles. Right in the middle of the column there walked a man nearly a head taller than the others, who was crying like a child and had blood oozing out of the left corner of his mouth. To see a big strong man cry was not an edifying spectacle. Evidently, it had a certain effect on one of the two wardens, for, when the column was some paces past us he dropped his bicycle, jumped into the column, and gave the man who was crying a couple of regular blows in the face.

While German policy towards foreign labour consisted of unparalleled and systematic ruthlessness and intimidation, it was nevertheless maintained in some German official circles that the edge had become blunt in the course of the years, and that other methods should be simultaneously employed.

Dr. Hupfauer, Director of the "Department for Social Self-Responsibility" of the German Labour Front<sup>1</sup> was one of the main exponents of the doctrine that the output of the foreigners could be largely improved if they received better psychological treatment. "Even now in the fourth year of the war", he wrote in February 1943<sup>2</sup>,

the workers undoubtedly possess considerable productive reserves . . . I am not thinking of a longer working day, from which so many employers expect miracles. It simply cannot be denied that the physical endurance of man is limited. Very long working hours result, in the long run, only in longer presence but not in a higher output.

While the main concern of the German agencies in 1942 had been to send as large a number of "Eastern" workers to Germany as possible, it was argued later that this policy should be changed and "Eastern" workers should undergo tests of their individual capacities and background, which would doubtless result in considerable increase of output.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Hupfauer also held the appointment of *Beauftragter für den Leistungskampf der Deutschen Industrie*.

<sup>2</sup> *Soziale Praxis*, Feb. 1943, p. 53; *Die Deutsche Volkswirtschaft*, third February issue, 1943, No. 6, p. 184.

<sup>3</sup> *Arbeitseinsatz und Arbeitslosenhilfe*, Jan. 1943, p. 5. A suggestion of more specialisation among recruited "Eastern" workers had been made before 1943; the *Donauzeitung* (Budapest), of 17 April 1942, for example, advocated the recruitment of miners from the Krivovoi Rog region for the mines in the Ruhr district.

During 1943, the changed military situation and the loss of vast stretches of territory in the Soviet Union, which had been one of the principal sources of manpower for German war economy, meant that foreign labour had to be employed less wastefully. In general, harsher methods of recruitment were introduced in the German-occupied territories, but efforts were also made, by means of various inducements, to improve output of foreigners already working in Germany. A leading editorial in the *Frankfurter Zeitung* of 29 July 1943 pointed out that Dr. Sauckel had officially described foreigners working in Germany as "guest workers" and that the position of "guest workers" had been progressively improved. Dr. Sauckel was credited with "continuous endeavours to make their lives easier and happier in order to improve output". According to a report of 28 July 1943<sup>1</sup>, the Reich Minister of Transport permitted men and women workers from the East to drive motor vehicles if accompanied by a second person acting as supervisor.<sup>2</sup> And the Reich Minister of Economic Affairs decreed that foreign workers were eligible for the German medal of merit, in recognition of the "sometimes excellent performance of foreign workers in the German armament industry".<sup>3</sup> On 31 July 1943, a Stettin newspaper reported that the Stettin police authorised employers to allow "Eastern" workers, as a reward for good behaviour, to wear the sign "East" on their left sleeve instead of on the chest. *Der Angriff* (Berlin) of 26 September 1943 announced that in future "Eastern" husbands, wives and other near relatives would, as far as possible, no longer be allocated to separate working places, but would be assigned to the same, or at least to neighbouring, localities and, conditions permitting, would be housed together.

When it had become increasingly impossible for Germany to return Soviet workers to their homes, Fritz Sauckel made the unconvincing announcement<sup>4</sup> that Germany would limit the forced employment of Soviet workers to two years, without, however, taking into account the period before 1 August 1942, so that the two-year period would, in no case, end for a Soviet worker before 1 August 1944. Even then the labour office was authorised to extend the term of employment by successive periods for another year, but after the two years, a Soviet worker might take up war work in the German-occupied parts of his own country, provided that he

<sup>1</sup> News Service of the German Newspaper Publishers (a subsidiary of the *Deutsches Nachrichten Bureau*).

<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, on 30 July 1943, the Police Chief of Weimar forbade workers wearing the "P" and "East" badge to use the municipal bus routes, and threatened not only the foreigners, but also "anybody" enabling them to use the buses with fines up to 150 RM or six months' imprisonment.

<sup>3</sup> N.P.D. (News Service of the German Foreign Office).

<sup>4</sup> *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 2 Aug. 1943.

supplied a substitute, if possible from among his own relatives. As late as the spring of 1944, when Germany had lost most of the conquered Soviet territory, this concession concerning the exchange of "Eastern" workers was still receiving publicity.<sup>1</sup>

A concession was offered to French workers when, on 16 October 1943, Fritz Sauckel informed Pierre Laval, head of the Vichy Government, that Germany would not demand further French manpower for Germany in 1943; "from now on, certain Frenchmen working in Germany will have an opportunity of being replaced, man by man, in German factories and concerns on the principle that the total number of French workers in Germany remains the same". Men over 45 and fathers of four children were to be "methodically" replaced by "young men".

To judge from official utterances, the authorities and camp commandants found that relaxation in the rigidity of treatment was irreconcilable with the whole scheme of compulsory labour<sup>2</sup>; yet too great severity made the foreigners even more stubborn and recalcitrant. District Leader Emil Dörner well expressed this dilemma in an address in May 1944, when he urged employers to select for camp leaders only men "whose character and personality will indisputably enable them to turn the foreigners into loyal collaborators and at the same time keep them under 'protective control' ".<sup>3</sup>

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The measures which the German authorities planned to repress risings of foreign workers, especially in the later stages of the war, were never publicly discussed, though oblique references to preparations for such an emergency were sometimes made. The *Kölnische Zeitung* of 23 September 1944, for example, under the heading "The Enemy Within", tried to dissipate anxiety over "the secret army of millions of foreigners assembled in Germany":

They need not love us, but they must be loyal. They are too much influenced by reason not to know that any lapse of conduct would hurt, not their hosts, but themselves. Those Germans who think of such dangers can rest assured that German leadership generally considers problems of this kind several months before they do.

<sup>1</sup> *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten*, 1-2 Apr. 1944.

<sup>2</sup> "The humblest member of our people should command more respect than the alien worker" (Heinrich BANGERT, District leader of the Labour Front, Düsseldorf, writing in the official economic press service of the National Socialist Party, *Wirtschaftspolitische Parole*, 20 Dec. 1942). "Care for the foreigners must not deteriorate into familiarity. The camps must be organised and the inmates treated in such a way as to give a strong impression of German socialism" (from a speech by Tönessen, District Trustee for Camp Welfare, at Wuppertal, May 1944).

<sup>3</sup> *Rheinische Landeszeitung* (Düsseldorf), 8 May 1944.

Outwardly, however, the keynote of propaganda was optimism and "true socialism". The head of the German Labour Front, Dr. Robert Ley, wrote in his Christmas message of 1944 to all foreign workers<sup>1</sup>:

In the East and West the enemies of Europe have been able to "liberate" extensive areas, but with them merely came want and death, unemployment, hunger, despair and chaos, affecting mainly the broad masses of the working people. I trust that in the coming year you will collaborate with us voluntarily as before in our common cause: for a Europe free from interference and tyranny of anti-continental Powers, a Europe which can fulfil the inner desires of our time in a peaceful competition of peoples and a free development of their national life; that is, the realisation of true socialism.

Foreigners' "loyalty" was still a propaganda theme even in the midst of the Soviet winter offensive of 1945. On 3 February 1945, the President of the Danzig *Gau* Labour Office, Party Comrade Stummeyer, said<sup>2</sup>:

In the reliable bearing and industry of the foreign workers in this district we recognise their faith in our final triumph over the hordes whom international Jewry drives across our frontiers with satanic methods, in order to destroy Western civilisation. If we continue to set them a good example, these foreign forces will constitute a tremendous additional reserve of labour and strength.

#### EFFORTS AT POLITICAL INDOCTRINATION

While Germany was relying chiefly on intimidation and on the terrorising effects of physical ruthlessness, efforts were also made, throughout the war, to influence the workers ideologically. In a negative sense, these efforts were aimed at discrediting anti-National Socialist and anti-German ideas, and at preventing anti-National Socialist and anti-German propaganda from reaching the recruited workers. The positive aspect consisted in the systematic diffusion of National Socialist propaganda.

In an endeavour to prevent the development of any solidarity among the polyglot masses, and to foment distrust and discord between the various groups, linguistic and national differences were deliberately emphasised. This policy was also pursued among persons coming from the same country, as, for example, French-speaking and Flemish-speaking Belgians<sup>3</sup>, persons from the different parts of Yugoslavia and, in particular, the various nationalities of the Soviet Union.

<sup>1</sup> German-European Service (in Dutch), 17 Dec. 1944.

<sup>2</sup> Danzig Broadcasting Station, 3 Feb. 1945.

<sup>3</sup> "It has been the tendency of the Germans to accentuate the divisions between French-speaking and Flemish-speaking Belgians. The latter are never called Belgians, but always Flemings, and are expressly considered as members of a nation friendly to Germany" (*Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 8 Dec. 1942).



In a confidential instruction of 20 February 1942<sup>1</sup>, Heinrich Himmler, in his capacity as Reich leader of the S.S. and Chief of the German Police, decreed that, "for general political reasons" distinctions should be made, among the workers coming from the eastern occupied territories, between the three following groups:

(1) Workers coming from what was before the outbreak of the German-Soviet war Soviet Russian territory, except Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, the district of Bialystok and the district of Lwow;

(2) Workers from Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia;

(3) Workers from the Government-General and the territories connected with it, if they were neither Poles nor Germans, *e.g.*, Ukrainians, White Russians, Kasubs, Masures, Slonsakes. In cases of doubt, whether a person was of White Russian, Russian or Ukrainian extraction, the "Confidential Agency in Germany" of Russia, White Russia, or the Ukraine had to be consulted.<sup>2</sup>

But a more important form of propaganda was the assertion of the socialist intentions, and, indeed, socialist achievements, of the Third Reich. It emphasised the community of interest between non-German and German workers, and was more consistent and general in its application than was emphasis of national differences. At the German "Labour Day" celebrations on 1 May 1942, prominence was given to the participation of foreign workers, because they were striving towards the same end, namely "a new and better Europe in which 'friend' and 'socialist' would not be, as in enemy countries, merely empty words".<sup>3</sup>

Franz Mende, who, as head of the Office for Labour Allocation of the Labour Front, was in charge of the supervision of millions of labour recruits, writing in the summer of 1943, emphasised the need of indoctrinating foreign workers (he expressly excluded, however, workers coming from the East): "the technique for the systematic use of foreign manpower must start from the firm basis of concrete political convictions". Since these persons "neither politically, nor as far as their citizenship and race is concerned, belong to the

<sup>1</sup> Referred to by Prof. SIEBERT, in *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 50 (1), supplement, 20 May 1942.

<sup>2</sup> Circular by the Reich Minister of the Interior, 14 November 1940, quoted in *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 51. Soviet workers had always had to wear an "East" badge. In the spring of 1944 this uniform "East" badge was replaced by three different badges, in order to distinguish between Russians, Ukrainians and White Russians. The *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten* of 1-2 April 1944 observed that, because of this differentiation, "every man and woman from the East can, from now on, wear the badges with pride". The emblems chosen for the new badges were those of the "voluntary" Russian units in the German Army (*Transocean News Service*, 4 May 1944; *Deutsches Nachrichten Bureau*, 4 May 1944). The new badges, connoting collaboration with the National Socialist régime, were thus in fact more obnoxious to non-collaborationist workers than the former, frankly discriminatory badge.

<sup>3</sup> *Der Mittag* (Düsseldorf), 30 Apr. 1942.

Greater German Reich . . . the elimination of psychological inhibitions is far more important [than in the case of German workers]. Reservations based on their political beliefs or philosophy of life must be cleaned out."<sup>1</sup>

In a speech made in Brussels<sup>2</sup>, Sauckel defended Germany against the accusation of using methods of deportation and slave traffic. He asserted that, on the contrary, National Socialists wanted the new Europe to be built upon the basis of a national-minded socialism, which was the dream, he said, of every worker of the continent. In order to overcome their negative attitude, foreigners must "receive an absolutely objective picture of our socialist intentions". On the position of the foreigner in German plants, Robert Ley (quoted by Franz Mende) wrote in his *Manual*:

The impression of us which millions of foreigners will receive now, will determine the future judgement of Europe on Germany and national socialism. Even the strongest propaganda would never be able to obscure or change the immediate impression which the present sojourn in Germany will make on foreign workers.

In the beginning of 1944, an expert on the training of camp-leader personnel again stressed the fact that the necessary increase in the productive output of foreigners depended on their "will for, and faith in, the victory of national socialism and thus of Europe. Foreign workers must be informed about the reactionary attitude of our democratic, liberalistic and bolshevist enemies"; Germany, on the other hand, "will make all its social achievements the common property of all European countries".<sup>3</sup>

In German-dominated France, propaganda constantly used socialist slogans in order to popularise the transfer of workers to Germany. For example, after a radio broadcast by Pierre Laval urging French men and women to volunteer for work in Germany, the spokesman of the *Légionnaires* said over the Lyons Radio (23 June 1942):

Workmen of France, it is to you especially that Mr. Laval appeals—to your hearts and feelings. He knows that the revolutionary ideals are deeply engraved in your hearts. The better socialism for which you long will spring from a regenerated Europe. He knows that he can rely on you.

On 24 June 1942, Dr. Friedrich, a German spokesman, said over Radio Paris:

<sup>1</sup> MENDE, *op. cit.*, p. 228.

<sup>2</sup> *Völkischer Beobachter*, 12 June 1943.

<sup>3</sup> Max TIETBOHL, in *Lagerführer Sonderdienst* (Feb. 1944), organ of the Office of Labour Allocation of the Labour Front. The article was reprinted in the Berlin Party organ, *Der Angriff*, on 12 March 1944.

By working in Germany they [the French workers] will get to know another country. They will see the German worker at his machine behave as they themselves behave at home. They will discover that the German worker is at heart just like themselves. As representatives of France, they will teach the Germans to know Frenchmen better. As we know little of you, so you know little of us. It is partly for this reason that we had war . . . We are all in the same boat. We are all fighting for a better life. Although national socialism is intrinsically German, its fundamental law is applicable to the whole of Europe: respect for the nation and respect for the worker; liberty and bread for the whole of Europe; a higher standard of living for the European worker; respect for everybody's work, be he a manual or intellectual worker.

During the same propaganda campaign Dr. Ley addressed French workers in a Paris factory in a similar vein. The *Transocean* News Agency reported that his speech had made a deep impression because (French) "socialist workers have paid particular attention to the great social progress made in Germany". Official National Socialist literature also called attention to the "backward character" of French social legislation and the small influence of labour under the French Republic.<sup>1</sup>

In other countries as well, Germany attempted to influence non-German workers by appeals to their political aspirations. For example, after the Italian surrender, the commander of the German occupation army in Italy, Field Marshal Kesselring, in an official and widely publicised manifesto, declared on 29 September 1943: "The Anglo-American war against Germany aims primarily at abolishing social achievements, because they endanger the attainment of anti-national, capitalist interests. National Socialist Germany intends to eliminate profiteers, anti-social elements, and all those who plan to grow rich at the expense of the people." By "accepting recruitment" for work in Germany, "every [Italian] worker will be able to contribute by his own labour to final victory and a better Europe. I am certain that you will realise which is the proper road to follow." As the military situation worsened, the claim that the National Socialist New Order represented socialism was more urgently repeated.

In complaint against the hostility of Netherlands workers towards national socialism, the German-dominated Utrecht paper *Volk en Vaderland* (18 August 1944) exclaimed: "And yet they call themselves Socialists! . . . If they only could be convinced that the

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<sup>1</sup> For example, the *Year Book, 1940-41*, of the Institute for Labour Research of the German Labour Front stated: "It is altogether characteristic of the period until 1936 that the influence of the French trade unions upon labour legislation was insignificant, although the backwardness of French social legislation should have demanded the tackling of a great many problems". The *Year Book* added that "in general the dominance of certain employers' and bankers' circles was unbroken until 1936".

only possibility of achieving a Socialist community lies in national socialism!"<sup>1</sup>

Later in the war, many efforts were made to intensify the indoctrination of foreigners, partly by allowing still wider scope to collaborationists from their own countries, and partly through "Socialist" reforms. Thus, the Italian Fascist Republic at the end of 1944 decreed a new organisation of labour which was hailed by the *Repubblica Fascista* "as a further step towards the Labour State which we desire", and by the *Corriere della Sera* as the finishing touch to the corporative structure initiated in 1926.<sup>2</sup>

### FOREIGN LANGUAGE PRESS

The great majority of foreign workers did not speak German and therefore the labour administration considered it necessary to arrange for the publication of foreign language newspapers. By the late summer of 1943 the following foreign-language newspapers had editions ranging from 6,600 to 80,000<sup>3</sup> (their combined total circulation was officially reported as 750,000).<sup>4</sup>

<i>Il Camerata</i>	("The Comrade")	Italian
<i>Enlace</i>	("The Link")	Spanish
<i>Le Point</i>	("The Point")	French
<i>L'Effort Wallon</i>	("Wallon Effort")	French
<i>De Vlaamsche Post</i>	("Flemish Post")	Flemish
<i>Van Honk</i>	("Away from Home")	Dutch
<i>Broen</i>	("The Bridge")	Danish
<i>Slovensky Tyzden</i>	("Slovak Week")	Slovak
<i>Domovina Hrvatska</i>	("Homeland Croatia")	Croat

<sup>1</sup> On 4 July 1944, in a propaganda article on the Belgian S.S. Brigade "Wallonia" (the Red Brigade) in the Rexist *Le Pays réel*, Hubert DETHIER wrote: "Today, in the clash of passions . . . we keep our faith in our revolutionary Socialist destiny. . . Old revolutionaries . . . rally around the red banners [of the Rexist Party]. Imbued with greatness and certainty, what do we care for the stupid mockeries of the hard-pressed bourgeoisie, that fights its war against social justice? One thing alone hurts us, the lack of understanding still shown by too many victims of the [pre-Hitler] régime of shame. . . Today socialism is up in arms. Socialism, our socialism, will finally conquer Capitalist disorder. . . Let all proletarians capable of doing so join the Red Brigade, which tomorrow will be a Division, a Division which, once victory is attained, will not disarm until capitalism has been definitely defeated. Comrades, Workers! Let the bourgeois who hate you gnash their teeth! Answer the call of your revolution, the call of socialism! . . . Have confidence in the Chief; he will lead the way to the only victory which counts for us, which ensures the sovereignty of labour and the reign of the worker." It appears that only 76 men volunteered for the S.S. "Wallonia" Red Brigade. A farewell ceremony for them, at which Victor Matthys, Chief of Rexists, addressed them, was held in Brussels on 24 May 1944 (Belgian Radio Home Service, 24 and 25 May 1944).

<sup>2</sup> Quoted by the German-dominated North Italian Radio, 26 Jan. 1945.

<sup>3</sup> Report of the *Arbeitswissenschaftliches Institut der Deutschen Arbeitsfront*, in *Neue Internationale Rundschau der Arbeit*, 3rd quarter, 1943, p. 258.

<sup>4</sup> Report of the Head of the Department for Labour Allocation of the Labour Front, at a meeting of the chief foreign officials assigned to the Labour Front, on 19 October 1943; *Völkischer Beobachter*, 20 Oct. 1943, quoted in *Neue Internationale Rundschau der Arbeit*, 4th quarter, 1944, p. 36.

<i>Rodina</i>	("Homeland")	Bulgarian
<i>Trud</i>	("Labour") <sup>1</sup>	Russian
<i>Ukrainez</i>	("The Ukrainian")	Eastern Ukrainian
<i>Holos</i>	("The Voice")	Western Ukrainian
<i>Bielaruski Rabotnik</i>	("The White Russian Worker")	White Russian
<i>Cesky Delnik</i>	("The Czech Worker")	Czech

The papers were delivered in bulk to the various plants, where they were distributed to the subscribers; in certain districts, they were also on sale at news stands and in railway stations. *Enlace*, the Spanish, and *Rodina*, the Bulgarian paper, were published bi-weekly; all the others were weekly.

In addition there were special papers for miners in Russian (*Schachtjor*—"The Miner"); in Ukrainian (*Na Schachtii*—"In the Mine"); and in Croat (*Sretno*—"Welcome"); and papers for agricultural workers in Dutch (*De Landbauwer*—"The Farmer"), and in Slovak (*Uroda*—"The Product of the Soil").<sup>2</sup> All the papers, which were openly propagandist, contained articles about Germany and news from the home country, as well as official information on questions such as tax deductions, travelling possibilities, behaviour in case of sickness, duties towards the employer, replies to queries<sup>3</sup>, etc. The papers were produced by native editors, under German control and direction.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Trud* is the title of the official newspaper of the Central Council of Trade Unions of the U.S.S.R.

<sup>2</sup> Foreigners were also urged to buy National Socialist-inspired illustrated magazines published in their own home countries. A number of French daily and weekly papers were sent to, or were on sale in, Germany.

<sup>3</sup> As an example, some items from the "Workers' Mail" column of *De Vlaamse Post* (Berlin) of 13 May 1943 may be quoted:

"Question: Jos. Popleu, a Fleming working in Dresden, asks if he is entitled to textile coupons. Answer: These are no longer distributed in Germany. You must get them in Flanders during your next holiday. If they are refused, ask the local relief office.

"Question: Roger Pattijn, a Fleming working in Gerbstedt, asks for a holiday. Answer: You must know that all holidays are cancelled. Leave is unobtainable even for the purpose of fetching clothes.

"Question: Leopold Depourque, a Fleming working in Duisburg, complains that he is not allowed to enter the shelter when the air-raid warning is sounded. Answer: In certain places, nobody is allowed to enter the shelters. But if other persons are admitted, the Flemings must be allowed in too.

"Question: Medard Delfour, a Fleming working in Zwickau, complains about the bad conditions in his camp. Answer: It is a scandal that the Flemings' liaison officer should be a Wallon. This must be rectified at once. Your complaints about the camp leader will be investigated if you send further particulars."

<sup>4</sup> Report of the *Arbeitswissenschaftliches Institut der D.A.F.* All foreign-language labour papers were published by the *Fremdsprachen Verlag G.m.b.H.*, Berlin-Charlottenburg "by agreement with the Reich Ministry for Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda"; the firm also published technical books in various foreign languages. The Commissioner-General for Manpower urged the labour offices to encourage the distribution of the foreign-language papers and technical books (e.g., *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 5 Apr. 1943, Part I, p. 369). For propaganda among "Eastern" women in particular, an illustrated fortnightly magazine containing fiction and other "non-political" matter was published in Russian and Ukrainian (*Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 25 Sept. 1943).

In comparison with the foreign-language newspapers, which were published in large quantities, other methods of influencing foreign workers were on a small scale. According to an official report communicated on 19 October 1943 to the senior foreign Labour Front liaison men<sup>1</sup>, "during the current year", in the 22,000 camps housing foreign workers, the "cultural programme" consisted of 3,800 language courses with 167,000 participants, and 4,000 sport events, 5,750 major "Strength through Joy" gatherings, and 18,000 meetings organised in the camps. Thus, on the average, there was one language course, one sport event, and one major "Strength through Joy" gathering in every fourth or fifth camp, and one meeting in 80 per cent. of the camps, during nine months. According to the same report, 235,000 books, 350 musical instruments and instruments for 60 orchestras, 4,940 radios and 11,000 pieces of sporting equipment were distributed during the period, or, on the average, 11 books, 16 pamphlets, 4 song books, 1.3 gramophone records, 0.23 musical instruments, 0.23 radios and 0.5 pieces of sporting equipment were distributed per camp, and an orchestra was organised in one out of every 366 camps.

### WORK BOOKS

From February 1935<sup>2</sup>, every German worker was required to possess a work book containing his personal particulars and details of his employment. Both workers and employers were required, under heavy penalties, to keep the work books up to date. The work book was a revival of a device the abolition of which had been an important accomplishment of the German labour movement in the 19th century. The National Socialist régime used it as its chief means of controlling the movement of labour, as well as the whereabouts of the individual worker, whose activities could be traced through it. The work books also greatly facilitated the preparation of black lists.

Before the war, special regulations applied to individual foreigners seeking work in Germany, with the double purpose of keeping undesirables out and keeping those admitted under full control. But when systematic mass importation of foreigners began during the war, simplified methods were applied to their work books and identity papers.

In the occupied parts of the Soviet Union, employment certificates also served as bread coupons and were issued only to persons whose "work passports" were sent by their employers to the German

<sup>1</sup> *Völkischer Beobachter*, 20 Oct. 1943, quoted in *Neue Internationale Rundschau der Arbeit*.

<sup>2</sup> *Reichsgesetzblatt*, Part I, p. 34.

labour office.<sup>1</sup> In Norway, the Reich Commissioner introduced work books on 25 November 1941. His decree openly admitted that the measure was aimed at providing Norwegians with rationed goods in proportion to individual efficiency and output of work.<sup>2</sup>

In other occupied countries where the inhabitants were conscripted for work, the German military and civilian authorities often made use of the workers' identity papers in order to keep control over them. For example, early in 1944, *Feldkommando No. 599* issued the following order to Serbs:

(1) Workers leaving their jobs or going home before their work is completed, will be punished by hard labour up to 3 months at the Banjac camp.

(2) Overseers of the labour units must take the identity paper away from every new worker. They are to be returned only after the conscript's work is completed.

.....  
(4) All overseers failing to carry out their duties under Articles 1 and 2 will be similarly punished with hard labour.<sup>3</sup>

Inside Germany the system of work books was completely overhauled in May 1943.<sup>4</sup> On the basis of new standardised work books for the millions of foreigners, a central register of all foreign workers employed in Germany was established in Berlin.

The foreigner's work book had to contain his personal particulars and details of his professional qualifications. Skilled trades such as hole-cutting or riveting, for example, had to be specifically mentioned.<sup>5</sup> Fritz Sauckel also authorised the labour offices to enter "official statements concerning the performance and the personal behaviour of the bearer" (obviously to facilitate the compilation of black lists). In order to distinguish them from the work books of Germans, foreigners' books were bound in a different colour. The central register in Berlin contained and kept up to date the name, personal particulars and all the more important entries made in every work book.<sup>6</sup> On entering employment the foreign

<sup>1</sup> See "A Visit to the Pskov Employment Office", in *Monatshefte für NS-Sozialpolitik*, No. 5-6, Mar. 1942, p. 70, quoted in *International Labour Review*, Vol. XLVII, No. 5, May 1943, p. 579.

<sup>2</sup> Order by the Reich Commissioner of the Occupied Norwegian Territories, Terboven, of 25 November 1941; *Verordnungsblatt für die besetzten Norwegischen Gebiete*, 29 Nov. 1941, p. 41.

<sup>3</sup> *Novo Vreme*, 19 Jan. 1944.

<sup>4</sup> Order by the Commissioner-General for Manpower, of 1 May 1943; *Reichsgesetzblatt*, Part I, p. 277. An official work book had to be issued to every foreigner employed within the territory of Greater Germany (with the exception of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia). "Foreigners" were defined in the Order as: (a) persons of nationality other than German; (b) German-protected persons; (c) stateless persons; and (d) persons whose nationality could not be ascertained.

<sup>5</sup> Order of 4 May 1943.

<sup>6</sup> After the intensification of air warfare against Germany, the information contained in the official registers often could not be kept up to date. However,

worker had to surrender his work book to the employer.<sup>1</sup> When the employment ended, the employer was required to present the book to the local labour office, which made an official entry recording the date of end of employment. (By this means control was also exercised over the employer.) The labour office could then either hand the work book to the foreigner, or withhold it from him. In the first case, he had to keep it carefully and carry it upon his person at all times<sup>2</sup>, until he started working on a new job. In the second case, he would encounter many difficulties. There were hardly any foreign workers in Germany who were legally—i.e., with the consent of both employer and the labour office—out of work, and several specialised police corps (the Gestapo, the German Labour Front agents, the factory guards, the military police, the railway police, the municipal police) would ask every foreigner who was suspected of trying to "loaf" or to escape, to produce his work book. A worker who left his job without authorisation from both his employer and the labour office, or a worker whose work book had been withheld by the labour office, was situated much like a convict escaped from prison; it must be remembered that civilian workers from the East were required to wear a conspicuous badge on their clothing.

The work books increased the efficiency and strictness of control. The fact that they were not fully introduced for foreign workers until the spring of 1943 suggests that before that date the German authorities were content to rely on rigid segregation and supervision of the foreigners, but that the political and military situation then made it advisable to take this step as an additional safety and police measure. The decision to issue millions of these documents and to keep them up to date involved (as various official German decrees and comments indicate) a very considerable additional strain on the administrative personnel, and further increased the unproductive administrative machinery of the compulsory labour policy.

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the destruction of the registers through bombing or fires "does not mean that they are lost, for in all cases they have been, or are being, reproduced by photostat" (*Die Wirtschaftskurve* (Frankfort on Main), May 1944, p. 305).

<sup>1</sup> In the spring of 1944, the *Reichsarbeitsblatt* reminded employers that they had to keep foreigners' work books during the time the latter were on leave at home (*Nachrichtendienst der Deutschen Zeitungsverleger*, 4 Mar. 1944).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 6 May 1943.



## CHAPTER XIV

### SOCIAL INSURANCE FOR FOREIGN WORKERS

#### WORKERS OTHER THAN POLISH AND SOVIET WORKERS

The shifting of huge masses of workers was bound to affect profoundly the social insurance rights of the persons and families concerned, as well as the social insurance systems of their countries. As a matter of general policy, Germany brought foreign workers under its own social insurance system (under conditions which are discussed below), but at the same time extracted a variety of social insurance services from the foreign countries. The arrangements varied from nationality to nationality and, often, from year to year. Some took the form of treaties and agreements concluded between the Reich and authorities representing (or accepted by the Reich as representing) the countries of origin of the workers. Not all these agreements were published.<sup>1</sup> German spokesmen frequently emphasised that in the field of social insurance, foreigners in Germany were on an equal basis with Germans ("principle of equality of treatment").

The laws, orders, regulations, instructions and directions concerning social insurance of foreign workers differed not only among the various nationalities, but often between groups of one and the same nationality, and were all frequently amended and changed, so that the picture is extremely complicated. It is, however, possible to describe their main features.

As "a matter of principle", the German social insurance system applied to all foreigners working within the Reich, irrespective of citizenship and origin (except Polish and Soviet workers and Jews of all nationalities) and whether or not they came to Germany as members of a foreign firm transplanted as a unit (*Firmeneinsatz*).<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The following agreements were published: with Belgium: *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 1943, Part II, p. 401; Bulgaria: *idem*, 1942, Part II, p. 480; Croatia: *idem*, 1942, Part II, p. 131; Denmark: *idem*, 1941, Part II, p. 115; France: *idem*, 1942, Part II, p. 184, 1943, Part II, p. 240; Hungary: *idem*, 1941, Part II, p. 332; Italy: *idem*, 1940, Part II, p. 332, *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1941, Part II, p. 137; *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 1942, Part II, p. 477; Netherlands: *idem*, 1941, Part II, p. 162; Norway: *idem*, 1941, Part II, p. 178; Rumania: *idem*, 1942, Part II, p. 130; Serbia: *idem*, 1942, Part II, p. 534; Slovakia: *idem*, 1940, Part II, p. 8; Spain: *idem*, 1943, Part II, p. 417.

<sup>2</sup> JUNGFLEISCH, in *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 463; Decree by the Reich Minister of Labour, 25 June 1941, *ibid.*, p. 518. By "logical" interpretation of the German-Netherlands and German-Belgian Treaties concerning accident insurance of

The same general rule applied to non-native workers in the German-annexed (as distinguished from the merely German-occupied) territories in the East<sup>1</sup> and in the Government-General.<sup>2</sup> Aliens employed in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia were covered by the rules and regulations of that country (*i.e.*, Czechoslovak law, as amended by German and Protectorate authorities).

One result of the "equality" rule in the field of social insurance was that the obligations incumbent upon foreigners were the same as those of insured Germans.<sup>3</sup> They had to pay the same compulsory contributions to German social insurance funds as Germans, make written or personal reports submitting the requisite information to the German social insurance funds and accept the decisions of the German institutions. In short, foreign labour was in every respect subject to German legislation and administration in social insurance matters. Thus the principle of "equality" was very advantageous to the German insurance funds, for it added several million persons to their contributors, without a corresponding increase in expenditure. "As a matter of principle" foreign workers received the same benefits as insured Germans. But, in the words of the Director of the Munich Labour Office, "their particular circumstances had to be taken into account in various ways". The social insurance benefits provided by German funds to foreigners and their families were reduced to a minimum, owing to the cumulative effects of the following factors: (a) the German wartime system of exploitation of foreign labour excluded certain risks, such as unemployment, covered by the German social security system; (b) if the risks matured, in many cases fewer benefits were granted to insured foreigners than their contributions had in fact covered; (c) if the risks matured and the foreigner's right to benefit was acknowledged, various devices were in many cases used to have the benefits granted by foreign, and not by German funds.

It is unnecessary to describe the German wartime social security system in detail. It will be enough to say that on 1 July 1942<sup>4</sup>, when 27 August 1907, amended by supplementary Conventions of 30 May 1914 and of 6 July 1912 (Decree by the Reich Minister of Labour, 25 June 1941, *ibid.*), workers from Belgium and the Netherlands were allowed, for six months after their arrival in Germany, to remain insured, under Belgian or Netherlands accident insurance, provided they had been so insured before their departure. For Italians, see Appendix VII.

<sup>1</sup> Order of 22 December 1941; *Reichsgesetzblatt*, Part I, p. 777.

<sup>2</sup> Orders by the Reich Minister of Labour, of 29 August 1941 and 24 February 1942.

<sup>3</sup> Under German law certain categories of workers, such as miners, agricultural workers and domestic workers, were excluded from the unemployment insurance scheme. Foreign workers employed in these categories were also exempt from paying unemployment insurance contributions.

<sup>4</sup> *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 1942, No. 14, Part II, pp. 290 *et seq.*; *Betriebskrankenkasse*, 1942, Nos. 13-14, pp. 197-199; cf. *International Labour Review*, Vol. XLVII, No. 2, Feb. 1943, pp. 248-251.

hope of an early German victory had been definitely abandoned, the social security contribution system was thoroughly simplified, together with the simplification of the wage tax system, mentioned above.<sup>1</sup> The changes did not alter the contribution scales, except to increase the contribution rates of certain categories of salaried employees, and this was of no practical importance to foreigners working in Germany. The industrial employee, whether German or foreign, manual or non-manual, had to contribute to the three principal branches of the German social insurance scheme, namely, sickness insurance, pension insurance and unemployment insurance. Although these three branches remained administratively and financially separate, employers had to make only one deduction from wages and salaries for all three branches, and had to remit these deductions, together with their own contributions, to the sickness insurance fund. The sickness insurance fund kept part of the sums received for itself and transferred the rest to the pension insurance and unemployment insurance funds respectively. The total contribution for the three insurance schemes was approximately 18 per cent. of wages and salaries, of which a fixed 5.6 per cent. was assigned to the pension insurance fund, and a fixed 6.5 per cent. to the Reich Fund for Manpower Allocation on account of unemployment insurance. The percentage of the sickness insurance contributions varied according to the rules adopted by the various sickness insurance funds. The total contribution of about 18 per cent. was approximately evenly divided between employers and employees.

#### UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Even before the outbreak of military hostilities the function of the German unemployment insurance system underwent a basic change. The body administering its funds even changed its name from National Institution for Employment Exchanges and Unemployment Insurance (*Reichsanstalt für Arbeitsvermittlung und Arbeitslosenversicherung*) to Reich Fund for Manpower Allocation (*Reichsstock für Arbeitseinsatz*).<sup>2</sup> It ceased to be an autonomous body and became, instead, merely another source of public revenue. The Fund was now administered by a special department of the Reich Ministry of Labour, and its President, Dr. Syrup, became Secretary of State in that Ministry. When Fritz Sauckel was appointed Commissioner-General for Manpower, he also

<sup>1</sup> See p. 121.

<sup>2</sup> Decree by the Führer of 21 December 1938; cf. WILLEKE: "Der Arbeitseinsatz im Kriege", in *Jahrbücher für Nationalökonomie und Statistik*, Aug. 1941, p. 191.

gained control over this Fund (the revenue of which, e.g., for the fiscal year of 1942, amounted to not less than 2,700 million RM).<sup>1</sup> Paradoxically enough, the Fund financed the supervision and control of conscripted foreign workers. But this expenditure consumed only a part of its income. For example, in the fiscal year of 1942, the Fund spent 870 million RM for "the administration of manpower allocation, the financing of productive work, unemployment benefit, and administrative expenses".<sup>2</sup>

The circumstances under which foreign workers entered Germany made it evident that they were paying an insurance premium for a non-existent risk. Whenever a foreigner terminated the job to which he had been allocated the labour office either transferred him to another employment, or very rarely, ordered his return home. The strictness of the German regulations made it practically impossible for foreign workers ever to qualify as unemployed, within the meaning of German unemployment insurance legislation.

The foreigners realised this situation and strongly objected to the unemployment insurance contribution, which they considered rather as a 6½ per cent. wage deduction. "Foreign workers", wrote a high official of the Labour Allocation Department of the German Labour Front early in 1944<sup>3</sup>, "continue to complain about this contribution for which, they claim, they do not receive any equivalent in return. They are, however, mistaken. To be sure, widespread unemployment has ceased to exist. Hence, unemployment insurance has long since lost its former significance." The contributions to the *Reichsstock* of 6½ per cent. were, he argued, used for financing other "social services"; such as "the special care given to foreigners during their journeys<sup>4</sup>, their passage through

<sup>1</sup> The figure of 2,700 million RM was composed of 2,405 million RM unemployment insurance contributions, and 295 million RM other revenue (interest and refund of loans, surplus of earlier years). The four-year average for the fiscal years of 1934-1937 was little more than half, namely, 1,480 million RM (1,468 million RM unemployment insurance contributions, and 12 million RM other revenue); for the four years 1938-1941, the average yearly revenue of the Fund rose to 2,302 million RM (2,190 million RM unemployment insurance contributions, and 112 million RM other revenue).

<sup>2</sup> The item of 870 million RM includes an undisclosed amount for expenses connected with the allocation and control of conscripted foreign workers.

<sup>3</sup> Dr. FUNKE, Chief of Section, Department of Labour Allocation, German Labour Front: "Die Soziale Sicherung der ausländischen Arbeitskräfte im Reich", in *Neue Internationale Rundschau der Arbeit*, 1st quarter, 1944, p. 33.

<sup>4</sup> FUNKE, p. 34. A recruited foreigner had to pay the expenses of his journey from his own country to the place of work. If he was unable to pay for his transportation the German Labour Office paid the travelling expenses, which the employer had to refund to the worker or to the Labour Office (see, for example, Order by the Military Commander in Belgium and northern France of 15 January 1943, concerning the conscription of Polish civilian workers; *Verordnungsblatt des Militärbefehlshabers in Belgien und Nordfrankreich für die besetzten Gebiete Belgiens und Nordfrankreichs*, No. 93, 23 Jan. 1943, p. 1130).

the transit camps, the transportation of the deceased to their home countries, etc.". The name was therefore changed from "unemployment insurance" to "labour allocation assistance". This seemingly innocent explanation really meant that unemployment insurance contributions were partly used for control and police measures carried out by the German Labour Front, the S.S., the Gestapo and factory guards.

### SICKNESS INSURANCE

The high pre-war rates of contribution to the German sickness insurance fund, calculated to provide the high pre-war standards of benefit, were still in force. But the benefits received by foreigners fell far below those standards.

In the first place, it was generally very difficult for foreigners to qualify as sick. The supervising personnel and the German doctors were usually distrustful of foreigners and were under constant pressure to be ruthless in preventing "unwillingness to work". On 26 February 1944, the German-controlled *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant* reported on the inadequate medical care given to Netherlands workers in Germany (although they were one of the nationalities that received better treatment) and on the "scepticism [German] doctors often showed towards foreigners reporting sick . . . Obviously, the doctors' understandable prejudice may sometimes lead to really serious cases of illness being overlooked."<sup>1</sup>

#### *Removal of Sick and Incapacitated Foreigners*

Another reduction in foreigners' sickness benefits was effected by the device of transporting them to their own countries when they suffered from serious illness. It was the policy of the Third Reich to get rid of sick and disabled foreign workers by removing them from German territory. Until 1941 the official German regulations required that sick foreign workers whose recovery was not to be expected "within two weeks at the most", should not receive medical treatment in Germany; if the German doctor certified them fit to travel, they must be immediately sent back to

<sup>1</sup> After two years' employment at the Hermann Göring Works in Linz (Austria), a Swiss worker reported that sick foreigners who absented themselves without permission from the chief medical officer of the undertaking were immediately handed over to the Gestapo by the factory police. The penalty for workers from countries occupied by Germany varied between 4 and 6 weeks' punishment camp. The sentence was posted up in the factory. On entering the punishment camp, prisoners were often deprived of their shoes, so that they had to go barefoot. They were frequently detailed to do work outside the camp, e.g., they were sent back into the compound of the Herman Göring Works for specially heavy employment such as construction work on railway lines (*Tribune de Genève*, 22 Aug. 1944).

the recruitment district in their own country.<sup>1</sup> Sick and incapacitated foreigners, such as Belgians and Netherlands, who returned to their own countries with the consent of the German Sickness Insurance Office, were entitled to the benefits which they would have received under German regulations while in Germany.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, this was a particularly objectionable feature of German manpower policy. The two-weeks' rule meant that every foreigner suffering from serious illness was forced, first, to obtain the necessary papers, visas and permits from the German authorities (and, frequently, from the authorities of his own country, as well as of the transit countries), and afterwards to undertake a journey which, under European wartime conditions, generally lasted several days and lacked the comforts which a sick person required. German officials tried to explain the two-weeks' rule by pointing to the scarcity of hospital accommodation. But the two-weeks' rule had been introduced and rigorously applied long before Germany began war against the Soviet Union, that is, before hospital facilities were taxed by the heavy influx of casualties. Later on, the increasing scarcity of doctors, supplies and hospital space further restricted medical services to foreigners.

The two-weeks' rule proved so wasteful in practical application that it was replaced in 1941 by a three-weeks' rule. The difference was merely one of degree. The principle remained and was steadfastly applied during the period of intensified utilisation of foreign manpower. If a foreigner fell sick and was incapable of work, he had, "as a rule", to be removed from German territory to his recruitment district unless he could be expected to recover within three weeks at the latest and also unless he could "be expected to remain afterwards in good health for a reasonably long time, or unless the illness was so serious that transportation to the home country was not possible".<sup>3</sup>

A foreigner who was too ill to travel was to receive medical treatment in Germany, but the Reich Minister of Labour expressly decreed that the patient should be removed from Germany "if and as soon as he is able to travel". This rule had to be interpreted, as rigidly as possible. Rather than allow a foreigner who was seriously ill to remain in Germany he "must be sent home, even if in the opinion of the physicians he can be transported only if accompanied by one or more attendants, so long as the expense will probably be less than that of continued medical treatment or

<sup>1</sup> Order by the Reich Minister of Labour, of 22 October 1940; *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 175.

<sup>2</sup> See pp. 215 *et seq.*

<sup>3</sup> Decrees by the Reich Minister of Labour, of 22 October 1940 and 8 October 1941; *Ausländische Arbeiter*, pp. 175 and 180.

hospitalisation".<sup>1</sup> It was an additional aggravation that this rule also applied if, contrary to expectation, a sick foreigner had not recovered after two (or three) weeks' treatment in Germany and "absolutely required" further medical treatment or hospitalisation. Attendants were to accompany the patient only to the frontier (except for Poles and persons from the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, who had to be accompanied to their home towns).

The introduction of the three-(instead of the two-)weeks' rule was not entirely advantageous to the sick foreigner; it was qualified by the new proviso that, even if recovery was expected within three weeks, he was still to be sent home immediately, without medical treatment, if he was not expected to remain in good health for a reasonably long time afterwards.

The accumulation of disabled foreigners at German frontier stations sometimes created administrative problems. On 8 January 1944, for example, Sauckel observed in a circular:

A report from Marburg-an-der-Drau informs me that foreign workers continue to arrive from all parts of the Reich, mainly Croats, Serbs, Bulgars and Greeks, who on account of sickness or for other reasons are unfit for work and therefore are to be returned to their own countries. In most cases they possess neither travelling papers nor return permits. Furthermore, they are in many cases provided only with a ticket to Marburg or to the Reich frontier.<sup>2</sup>

Legal, bureaucratic and political difficulties apart, sick foreign workers' chances of receiving medical treatment or hospitalisation, while in Germany, were poor. As early as 1941, Dr. Birkenholz stated in his official comment on the German regulations that "medical treatment or admission to hospital is possible only in quite exceptional cases". The lighter cases should be given sick treatment in the sick rooms of the camps and hutments.<sup>3</sup> "The present heavy demands on hospital medical institutions make it imperative to limit the admission of foreign workers to absolutely necessary cases."<sup>4</sup> The foreigners' precarious situation was summarised in the statement that "any medical treatment or admission to a hospital is possible only in quite extraordinary cases".<sup>5</sup> If detained by the police, or in prison, concentration camp, correction

<sup>1</sup> *Ausländische Arbeiter*, pp. 175 and 180.

<sup>2</sup> The circular continued: "I give warning that even foreigners who are sent back to their own countries because of inability to work or for police reasons, in all circumstances require a regular [German] return visa, a passport and an [entrance] visa [for their own country] . . . They will be given tickets to the railway station nearest to their homes, whether or not they are liable for payment of their return fare" (Circular of 8 January 1944; *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 10 Feb. 1944, Part I, p. 53).

<sup>3</sup> BIRKENHOLZ, in *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 96.

<sup>4</sup> Decree by the Reich Minister of Labour, of 8 October 1941, *ibid.*, p. 180.

<sup>5</sup> BIRKENHOLZ, *ibid.*

camp, etc. (so called "cases of police character") a sick foreigner was not entitled to any of the services otherwise granted to him.<sup>1</sup>

As a rule, foreign workers were not supposed to be treated by private doctors. Under Sauckel's instructions, they had a choice only between camp doctors and doctors employed in social security work; the choice depended not on the foreigner's preference, but on local circumstances. But there were not enough of these "official" doctors for the millions of recruited workers.

In 1942, Germany began to bring in foreign physicians and surgeons who were to take care, under German supervision, of their fellow countrymen in the hutments and camps.<sup>2</sup> But by no means all the foreign doctors brought into Germany were assigned to this task, and the scarcity of doctors and medical personnel available for recruited workers continued throughout the war.

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As long as the military situation permitted, the German authorities continued to follow the policy of removing sick, worn-out and disabled foreign workers from German soil. At the same time they built up an elaborate system in western and north-western Europe, to induce social security institutions in the foreigners' own countries to look after them on their return. The benefits with which labour recruits were thus provided at home were granted on behalf, and allegedly at the expense of, the German social insurance funds. It is true that means were found to avoid direct payment for these benefits by foreign social insurance funds. But through arrangements that recall the wage transfer schemes, the greater part of the benefits at least were paid, not by Germany (which had received the corresponding social insurance contributions), but by the foreign countries themselves. This was equally true of the family sickness insurance benefits granted, on behalf of the German social insurance funds, to the dependants of foreigners working in or for Germany. Some aspects of these arrangements may be briefly described.

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. ADAM: "Kostenregelung bei Erkrankung, Schwangerschaft, Rückkehr und Tod von ausländischen Arbeitskräften", in *Arbeitseinsatz und Arbeitslosenhilfe*, Jan. 1943, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Information upon foreign doctors has been rare and contradictory. In the summer of 1942, the German press reported that 200 Ukrainian doctors would soon be brought to Germany "in order to look after Ukrainian workers". On 10 September 1943, the German-sponsored Dutch paper, *Van Honk*, spoke of 1,000 foreign doctors working in the Reich. A few days later a Finnish newspaper mentioned 2,000 foreign doctors in Berlin alone (*Suomen Sosialdemokraatti*, 19 Sept. 1943), a large portion of whom, however, were obviously medical students rather than practitioners taking care of foreign workers (Radio Paris, 8 Sept. 1943). A Berlin propaganda broadcast of 27 April 1944 claimed that at that date 2,500 foreign doctors were looking after foreign workers in Germany.



## FAMILY SICKNESS INSURANCE BENEFITS

German sickness insurance contributions were computed to cover the expenses of medical care and certain other benefits granted by the German social insurance system to dependants of the insured person, but German legislation limited these services to dependants resident in Germany. Since the great majority of dependants did not live with the insured foreigners in Germany, they were not eligible.

"In order to relieve foreigners working in the Reich from anxiety about members of their families who fall sick, and thus to create in the non-German countries an additional incentive to take up work in Germany"<sup>1</sup>, the Reich, in the two and a half years between June 1939 and December 1941, made agreements with social insurance institutions in the "Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia"<sup>2</sup>, the "Republic of Slovakia"<sup>3</sup>, the Governments of Denmark<sup>4</sup>, Italy<sup>5</sup>, Hungary<sup>6</sup>, Rumania<sup>7</sup>, France<sup>8</sup>, and Bulgaria<sup>9</sup>, and the "Independent State of Croatia"<sup>10</sup>. In these agreements it was stipulated that certain categories of dependants left behind by heads of families who were working in Germany should be eligible for family sickness insurance benefits. The principle was also applied to Norwegian dependants resident in Norway. In the autumn of 1941<sup>11</sup>, these arrangements were extended to Frenchmen, Belgians, Netherlands, Danes and Norwegians who were working, not in Germany proper, but for German authorities or German firms in the occupied eastern territories. Thus, for instance, the dependent wife, living in Belgium, of a Belgian working in the Ukraine for a German-run armament factory, would receive sickness insurance benefits from the German Sickness Insurance Office, functioning under the German Military Commander for Belgium and northern France, in Brussels.

At about the same time, Danes working in Norway for German undertakings were included in the German sickness insurance scheme. Dependants left in Denmark by Danes transported to Norway were to receive family sickness benefits from the Danish

<sup>1</sup> JUNGLEISCH, in *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 465.

<sup>2</sup> *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 1941, Part II, p. 6.

<sup>3</sup> *Idem*, 1941, Part II, p. 8.

<sup>4</sup> *Idem*, Part II, p. 115.

<sup>5</sup> See Appendix VII.

<sup>6</sup> *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 584 (37), supplement, 20 May 1942.

<sup>7</sup> *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 1941, Part II, p. 130.

<sup>8</sup> *Idem*, 1942, Part II, p. 184.

<sup>9</sup> *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 585 (1), supplement, 15 Sept. 1942. The Bulgarian agreement was not ratified and therefore did not come into effect until 1943.

<sup>10</sup> *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1942, Part II, pp. 131, 296.

<sup>11</sup> Decree by the Reich Minister of Labour, of 13 September 1941; *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 466 (1), supplement, 20 May 1942.

social insurance institutions, under the control of the German Sickness Insurance Office in Copenhagen.

These arrangements differed very widely, as did the manner and degree of their actual application in the different countries and at various stages of the war. But all the arrangements had some common features. Whatever benefits were granted, they had to be granted, as a general rule: (a) by the foreign countries themselves, and (b) under strict German supervision. If the foreigner escaped from German employment, or got into trouble in Germany, the family insurance benefits had to be stopped. On the other hand, the promise that families whose providers had gone to Germany would be "taken care of" was widely advertised, both as an inducement to foreigners to accept employment and as a means of maintaining their morale when employed.

A typical procedure in occupied western Europe was as follows. The German sickness insurance office at which the head of the family was insured while working in Germany, would issue an individual certificate. This certificate would then be sent to the German branch office in Paris, Brussels or The Hague, as the case might be, whence it would be forwarded to the worker's home in France, Belgium or the Netherlands. If a case of sickness or pregnancy occurred in his family, the sick or pregnant dependant had, in person, to submit to the mayor the German certificate in question, to testify before him that the head of the family was still working in Germany and to specify what medical services were desired. Thereupon, the mayor, if satisfied<sup>1</sup>, issued a "sickness certificate". This certificate entitled the patient to free treatment by an authorised doctor or dentist during the next three months<sup>2</sup>, to a 70 per cent. refund for certain medicines and minor medical appliances, and to payment of 50 per cent. of the minimum hospital rates (but never exceeding 3 RM a day and, in France, not exceeding 60 francs) up to 13 weeks. The assistance given in case of childbirth of the absent worker's wife, daughters, step-daughters or foster-daughters, consisted of 20 RM (in Norway, 30 RM, in Denmark, 25 RM)<sup>3</sup> "in lieu of the services of a midwife". In addition, medical care, medicines and some minor medical appliances might, if necessary, be granted to a limited extent.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In France, one of the changes introduced by the German-French agreement on social insurance questions of 16 May 1943 (superseding the German-French agreement of 14 October 1941) transferred these duties from the mayors to the social insurance institutions.

<sup>2</sup> Workers from western Europe were entitled, on the death of the wife or a dependent child, to a payment of 20 RM or 10 RM respectively. Instead of being sent to the absent widower or father, these small sums were usually paid to the person who assumed responsibility for the funeral (*Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 468, p. 513 (6), supplement, 20 May 1942).

<sup>3</sup> Decree by the Reich Minister of Labour, of 28 February 1941; *ibid.*, p. 499.

<sup>4</sup> JUNGFLEISCH, *ibid.*, p. 467.

In France, before 1 June 1941, the sickness certificate entitled the bearer to receive treatment only from practitioners whose names were entered in the Vichy Government's corporative registers *Ordre des médecins de France* and *Confédération nationale des syndicats dentaires*, or *Fédération dentaire nationale de France*.<sup>1</sup> In order to tighten political control and to prevent contact between the population and "unreliable" members of the medical profession, the official National Socialist Association of Social Insurance Practitioners of Germany was, from 1 June 1941, put in control of the medical practitioners in all occupied western territories.<sup>2</sup>

### SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS IN FRANCE<sup>3</sup>

During the first phase of German wartime labour policy, when recruitment from France was still largely "voluntary", the Germans issued unilateral regulations providing for the grant, in accordance with German legislation, of family sickness benefits and sickness benefits to French workers who, with German authorisation, returned to the occupied zone (always with the exception of Alsace-Lorraine).<sup>4</sup> These benefits were provided by the German Sickness Insurance Office set up in Paris. During that period, *i.e.*, until November 1941, no benefits were granted, as far as Germany was concerned, to dependants or returned French workers in the unoccupied zone.<sup>5</sup>

After two weeks of negotiations, held, it appears, on German initiative, an agreement (*procès-verbal*) was signed in Paris on 14 October 1941, between delegates of the German Military Commander, the Reich Minister of Labour and the French (Vichy) Secretary of State for Labour. The agreement, which was expressly described as provisional, regulated the conditions under which German-employed French workers and their families were to be entitled to sickness (including maternity) benefits, benefits after the death of the insured worker, employment injury (accident) benefits and invalidity and old-age pensions. Its main provisions came into force on 1 November 1941.

Under the agreement, the German Sickness Insurance Fund in Paris and its branches in Nancy and Lille continued to grant

<sup>1</sup> Instructions of the Paris *Deutsche Krankenkasse für die besetzten Französischen Gebiete* (undated), quoted *ibid.*, p. 513 (3), supplement, 20 May 1942.

<sup>2</sup> Decree by the Reich Minister of Labour, of 15 May 1941; *ibid.*, p. 511.

<sup>3</sup> The following passage is largely based on information given to the International Labour Office by the Provisional French Government in February 1945.

<sup>4</sup> Decrees by the Reich Minister of Labour of 28 September 1940, 6 November 1940 and 15 May 1941 (*Ausländische Arbeiter*, pp. 485, 489, 508).

<sup>5</sup> Circular by the French Secretary of State for Labour to the directors of the *Services régionaux des assurances sociales*, of 28 October 1941.

benefits, under German law, to the categories mentioned. For the unoccupied zone, the Germans agreed that French social insurance institutions should grant benefits, in accordance with French law. The cost of these services was to be refunded by Germany, provided that they were rendered only after consent had been obtained from the German Sickness Insurance Fund in Paris. That fund had also to furnish to the French institutions, for the computation of the benefits, such data as the periods for which benefits were to be granted, the wages of French workers while in Germany, and the like. Until they received this information the French institutions could only make provisional arrangements.

It should be noted that benefits could be granted in either zone only on receipt of individual notifications from the social insurance fund in Germany to which the French worker concerned was attached. Much difficulty was caused by the slowness with which these official notifications arrived and additional delays arose from the slowness of the German Sickness Fund in Paris in communicating its information and consent. There were many further complications due to differences between German and French law as applied in each of the two zones.

The scheme was revised as the result of a German-French agreement of 16 May 1943, which came into effect on 1 July 1943. The grant of benefits for the whole of France was now entrusted to French departmental sickness insurance funds (*Caisses départementales*). The German Sickness Fund in France ceased to handle individual claims itself, and was confined to directing and supervising the French departmental funds.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, the scheme was extended to cover German-employed French agricultural workers and their dependants. Without lessening German control, the formalities were made less cumbersome.<sup>2</sup> Benefits were granted according to French law, but with modifications (e.g., concerning free medical care, computation of cash allowances and reimbursement of costs of pharmaceutical supplies) which were partly favourable to the beneficiaries. An arrangement which until 1 July 1943 had applied only to the occupied zone now extended to the whole of France; medical treatment (at the practitioner's office or the patient's home) and dental treatment had to conform to

<sup>1</sup> Later in the war, the Germans, while keeping full control, tended to entrust the technical and administrative side of social insurance to national institutions in other countries too. At the end of 1943, German social security offices still existed in Paris, Brussels, The Hague, Copenhagen, Oslo, Belgrade and Riga. "Mostly, however, the foreigners, once returned to their own countries, were cared for by the social insurance institutions of their respective countries, which granted benefits at the request of the German social insurance institutions" (FUNKE, *op. cit.*, p. 31). For arrangements concerning Italians, see Appendix VII.

<sup>2</sup> Circular by the French (Vichy) Minister-Secretary of State for Labour, to the directors of the *Services régionaux des assurances sociales*, of 10 June 1943.

the agreements between the official German National Socialist doctors' and dentists' organisations, and the Vichy *Ordre des médecins de France*.<sup>1</sup>

In spite of this simplification, many difficulties still arose. Delays due to the German Sickness Fund in Paris continued; and the various official German documents which individual claimants had always to produce before receiving benefits, were still arriving very late, and, when they came, were often incomplete. According to investigations carried out after liberation, the "return passes" of sick, injured or disabled French workers hardly ever contained authority from the German social insurance fund to which they had been attached while working in Greater Germany, to grant them benefits after their return. As said before, such authorisation was a prerequisite; but experience showed that many sick or injured French workers, particularly those most gravely affected, could not cope with all the formalities before their return. A third German-French agreement was concluded on 11 March 1944. Among other minor modifications, it provided that the German Sickness Fund in Paris should, in exceptional cases, itself grant the authorisations not granted by the social insurance funds in Greater Germany before the claimant's return.

### *Finance of the Benefits*

French institutions making payments on behalf of German insurance funds had to send their requests for repayment, with all the necessary evidence, to the Union of Social Insurance Funds of the Paris District, which, after examination, forwarded them to the German Sickness Fund in Paris. The German Fund, after further examination, then repaid the money through the same channel. During the last year of German occupation, under the 1943 agreement, the French departmental funds received, from July 1943, a monthly lump sum of 25.40 francs (equivalent to 1.27 RM) for every industrial or other non-agricultural French worker employed in Germany, and of 17.80 francs (equivalent to 0.89 RM) for every agricultural worker. Out of these payments, the departmental funds paid family sickness and maternity benefits and the sickness and maternity benefits due to returned French workers.<sup>2</sup> The 1943 agreement provided for revision, upward or

<sup>1</sup> Circular by the French (Vichy) Minister-Secretary of State for Labour.

<sup>2</sup> The cost of benefits paid, on behalf of Germany, on the death of a German-employed French worker, under French "survivors' insurance", continued to be repaid through direct accounting with the German Sickness Fund in Paris. One of the concessions in the 1944 agreement was a doubling of the benefits to be paid under French "survivors' insurance".

downward, of these lump sum rates, if the actual expenses of the French institutions differed by more than 5 per cent. The 1944 agreement accordingly adjusted the account by fixing the lump sum for the last six months of 1943 at 20.80 francs (equivalent to 1.04 RM) for every German-employed French worker<sup>1</sup>, and added 6 million francs for hospitalisation expenses during that period. It also increased, from 1 January 1944, the monthly lump sum payments for industrial and other non-agricultural French workers in Germany, to 32.00 francs (equivalent to 1.60 RM) and for agricultural workers to 22.40 francs (equivalent to 1.12 RM).<sup>2</sup>

When the Germans left France, the arrears, according to preliminary investigations, amounted to approximately 40 million francs. The greatest part of this amount was due for repayment of the cost of family sickness benefits; the second largest, though a much smaller sum, for payments made by the French institutions on behalf of Germany to the *Ordre des médecins de France*. But otherwise, the French institutions which handled these matters did not have to use their own funds, since they were repaid by the German Sickness Fund in Paris, while the German fund itself handled individual insurance cases in the occupied zone of France until July 1943.

Whence did the German Fund in Paris obtain the money? The arrangements which it made with the various social insurance funds in Germany to which foreign workers were attached and for which it acted are not known. There were two obstacles to the actual remittance of funds, either in German or foreign currency, outside the Reich. One was the clearing system organised by Germany during the war, which put Germany in debt for forced loans in the countries which it dominated. As in the case of wage transfers<sup>3</sup>, the true circumstances were concealed from the beneficiaries, the population at large, and, often from the administrative authorities of the country. In France, preliminary investigations led the French Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance to the conclusion that the money needed by the German Sickness Insurance Fund in Paris and its branches for its payments, probably

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<sup>1</sup> The agreement also fixed at 649,000, for the second quarter of 1943, the number of French workers in Germany for whom the French departmental funds received lump sum payments from the German Sickness Fund in Paris (Arrangement of 11 March 1944, *Déclarations*, §1, *Taux forfaitaires*).

<sup>2</sup> The agreement of 11 March 1944 provided that a revision of the lump sum rates could be demanded, at the latest, by 30 September 1944. Otherwise, they were to remain in force until 30 June 1945, after which they would be tacitly renewed for nine-month periods until, at the latest within one month before the expiration of each period, a demand for modification was made to the German Military Commander in France (Art. 10, Agreement of 16 May 1943, as amended by Agreement of 11 March 1944).

<sup>3</sup> See Chapter XII.

came, not from Germany, but from the Vichy Government. No information is available upon the origin of the French francs which the departmental funds received from the Germans in repayment of lump sum advances. But there are strong indications that the various German social insurance funds deposited repayments with the German clearing agency in Berlin, and that the corresponding amounts were paid by France, in French francs, to the debit of the Reich. In Belgium the German Sickness Fund in Brussels continued to handle individual family sickness insurance benefits for German-employed Belgians. The Belgian social insurance system differs more widely from the German system than does the French, and the Germans therefore chose to continue, up to the end of their rule, an arrangement which was discontinued in France in 1943. After liberation, the Belgian Government found that the German Sickness Insurance Fund in Brussels had received its funds, not from Germany, but from the Belgian *Banque d'Emission*, the note-issuing bank created by the Commander of the German occupation army.<sup>1</sup>

German legislation on transfer of money from Germany to foreign countries is relevant in this connection. Six days before the outbreak of the war, on 26 August 1939, the Reich Minister of Labour issued a Decree concerning the transfer of money and the crediting of foreign accounts for social insurance services.<sup>2</sup> The Decree was a sequel to secret orders issued in preparation for the war by the Reich Minister of Economics, orders which were not made public and were to come into effect on 1 September 1939 (the day on which the German attack on Poland began). Under regulations of the same date, certain transfers of money by mail were still permissible, but in other cases no German-held account of a foreign social insurance fund could legally be credited on the books with any amount, without a permit from a German foreign exchange control board (*Devisenstelle*).

A few months later, a Decree concerning the handling of foreign assets, dated 15 January 1940<sup>3</sup>, prohibited any payment to an enemy<sup>4</sup> (physical or legal person) abroad, either directly or indirectly, by cash, cheque, draft, or any other form. The same provision applied to social security funds.<sup>5</sup> The secret regulations

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<sup>1</sup> Information received by the International Labour Office from the Belgian Government in February 1945.

<sup>2</sup> *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 587.

<sup>3</sup> *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1940, Part I, p. 191.

<sup>4</sup> For an example of the impact of German administration upon the social insurance system of a country which, after being occupied, was not considered as an enemy country, but was annexed to the Reich, see Appendix VII regarding Luxembourg.

<sup>5</sup> JUNGFLEISCH, in *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 484, supplement, 20 May 1942.

issued by the Reich Minister of the Interior in 1939 preceded the outbreak of the war and were a part of Germany's preparations. Similarly, the Decree of 15 January 1940 preceded the second stage of the war, namely, the Reich's invasion of north-western, western and south-eastern Europe.

By the time the drive for labour began in these parts of Europe, it had already been made impossible to transfer funds for the payment of sickness insurance benefits to the dependent families of German-employed breadwinners. In the spring of 1942, an official comment on German legislation on foreign labour stated that "in the meantime, owing to the favourable development of the war, the Reich Minister of Economic Affairs has granted exceptions from this prohibition on a large scale".<sup>1</sup> These exceptions do not seem to have been granted for family insurance benefits. In the summer of 1942, the Reich Minister of Labour established a clearing system for the family insurance benefits of French, Danish, Belgian, Netherlands', Norwegian, Czech, Slovak, Italian, Hungarian, Rumanian, Bulgar and Croat dependants.<sup>2</sup> A central clearing or pooling agency, the *Verbindungsstelle der Deutschen Krankenversicherung*, was created at the National Association of (German) Local Sickness Insurance Funds (*Reichsverband der Ortskrankenkassen*) in Berlin. German insurance branch offices in France, Belgium, Netherlands, Denmark and Norway, and the German Social Insurance Control Office in Prague (*Verrechnungsstelle der Reichsverbände der Reichskrankenkassen und der Reichsknappschaft*) were ordered to report regularly to the new pooling agency, indicating the services rendered on behalf of German family insurance within their respective jurisdictions. The pooling agency in Berlin would then allot the costs of these services among the various local German insurance funds (which had received the contributions of German-employed foreigners), prescribing to each how much it had to contribute to meet the total expenditure incurred outside the Reich. The sums owed to these outside agencies were thus collected by, or credited to, the central pooling agency in Berlin.

In Italy (until the summer of 1943), Rumania, Bulgaria, Hungary and Croatia, a somewhat different method was used. There were no branches of the German sickness insurance system in these countries, nor did Germany require reports from them. Instead, the central Berlin pooling agency used its discretion in deciding what sums were to be credited to the German-held accounts for sickness insurance benefits of families whose providers had gone to Germany. No provision was made for the families of workers

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>2</sup> Decree of 18 July 1942; *ibid.*, p. 585 (1), supplement, 15 Sept. 1942.



from other countries, such as the occupied parts of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia (with the exception of Croatia) or Poland.

### EMPLOYMENT INJURY (ACCIDENT) INSURANCE

While in Germany, foreigners from countries other than Poland and the Soviet Union were entitled to the same benefits under German employment injury (accident) insurance as comparable German workers.<sup>1</sup> In spite of this equality rule, foreign workers suffered from the same disadvantages as under the sickness insurance system. The policy of removing from the Reich disabled foreigners who could not be expected to recover rapidly was applied with special severity to these cases, so long as the course of the war permitted, since industrial accidents and occupational diseases often involve the grant of benefits over long periods of time, and lead to protracted or permanent incapacity for work.

The German Social Insurance Code provided that non-German citizens, to be eligible for benefits, must have their regular residence within the borders of the Reich.<sup>2</sup> This provision covered both disabled foreigners and, if the accident resulted in death, their dependent survivors; so long as such persons were domiciled outside Germany their respective claims were "suspended". Foreigners who on account of injury or occupational disease were removed from Germany would thus have been prevented from receiving medical care, cash allowances and pensions; and if the injury or disease proved fatal, the provision would have prevented their survivors from receiving the pensions to which they were entitled under German law.

No figures concerning industrial accidents and occupational diseases were published by the German authorities, but occasional references indicated a greatly increased frequency rate of industrial accidents and occupational diseases even among German workers.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> In this branch of social insurance contributions were paid by the employer only.

<sup>2</sup> The German Insurance Code provided that exemptions might be made for persons living in frontier districts, and for citizens of countries whose legislation granted equivalent accident insurance benefits to survivors of a German citizen killed by an industrial accident in their country, even if the German survivors did not live in the country where the accident occurred.

<sup>3</sup> For example, *Arbeiterschutz* wrote on 15 May 1943: "At present it is extremely difficult . . . to install ventilating equipment or devices of even the simplest kind, to say nothing of a more elaborate kind. Even respirators for workers especially exposed to danger cannot always be provided promptly and in sufficient numbers . . . The restrictions on the employment of women and juveniles on unhealthy work are no longer completely applicable to the handling of substances containing benzene and the like." The article added that the extension of working hours in badly ventilated rooms increased the danger of poisoning. An Order of the Reich Minister of Labour, of 22 February 1944, referring to working conditions of German women in the timber industry, pointed out that "very frequently

From the German point of view, there were two disadvantages in leaving incapacitated foreigners without assistance after their return home. It would create an administrative problem for the German authorities outside Germany; and it would cause additional bitterness among the deportees and their families and thus increase resistance to new recruitment drives. Administrative and political considerations of this kind prompted Germany to waive the "residence-in-Germany" requirement, but not to abandon the policy of removing incapacitated foreigners from the country. Germany succeeded in fact in transferring to the countries of origin responsibility for the administration of medical benefits, on behalf of the German employment injury insurance fund. This transfer of responsibility was convenient for Germany from every point of view: simplified administration; economy in money, medical personnel and equipment; and avoidance of language difficulties and political complications.

The transfer could not be achieved without the active collaboration of the countries concerned. Germany therefore invoked pre-war bilateral treaties, as in the case of Belgium<sup>1</sup>, the Netherlands<sup>2</sup>, Denmark<sup>3</sup>, (non-German) persons from Bohemia and Moravia<sup>4</sup>, and Yugoslavia (except Croats)<sup>5</sup>, or concluded new treaties, as with Italy<sup>6</sup>, France<sup>7</sup>, Hungary<sup>8</sup>, Rumania<sup>9</sup>, Croatia<sup>10</sup> and Bulgaria.<sup>11</sup> A few weeks before the opening of hostilities against the Soviet Union, the Reich Minister of Labour decreed that the residence requirement was abrogated for the occupied territories of western

dust exhausts are inadequate; moreover, since the war, many firms have possessed no dust-removing installations or their installations have not been working owing to lack of power. In most cases, it is therefore inevitable that fine dust should settle in the hair, eyes, and respiratory organs of workers, who are thus exposed to the danger of silicosis" (*Nachrichtendienst der Deutschen Zeitungsverleger*, 22 Feb. 1944).

<sup>1</sup> Treaty of 6 July 1912; *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1913, p. 23.

<sup>2</sup> Treaty of 27 August 1907 (*ibid.*, p. 763), amended by Treaty of 30 May 1914 (*ibid.*, 1915, p. 312) and extended to cover Austria by exchange of notes between Germany and the Netherlands of 30 September 1938 and 8 June 1939 (*ibid.*, Part II, p. 937).

<sup>3</sup> Treaty of 19 July 1933 (*ibid.*, 1934, Part II, p. 937).

<sup>4</sup> Treaty of 21 March 1931 (*ibid.*, 1933, Part II, p. 1016) as basis of agreement of 14 March 1940 (*ibid.*, Part II, p. 107).

<sup>5</sup> The Treaties between Germany and Yugoslavia of 15 December 1928 (*ibid.*, Part II, p. 561), and between Austria and Yugoslavia of 21 July 1931 (*Bundesgesetzblatt*, 1934, p. 59), were declared applicable by Order of the Reich Minister of Labour of 2 January 1940 (not published) (*Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 482, supplement, 15 Oct. 1942).

<sup>6</sup> See Appendix VII.

<sup>7</sup> Agreements of 14 October 1941, 16 May 1943, 11 May 1944.

<sup>8</sup> Treaty of 24 July 1941 (*ibid.*, p. 483 (9), supplement, 20 May 1942).

<sup>9</sup> Treaty of 23 August 1941 (*ibid.*, p. 483 (4), supplement, 20 May 1942).

<sup>10</sup> Treaty of 10 December 1941 (*ibid.*, p. 483, supplement, 20 May 1942).

<sup>11</sup> Treaty of 2 December 1941 (*ibid.*, p. 481, supplement, 15 Oct. 1942). As already stated, this treaty was not ratified until 1943, owing to the special political situation in Bulgaria, but German official instructions ordered its application notwithstanding the absence of ratification.

and north-western Europe, and for Denmark (which, at that time, was not considered occupied territory).<sup>1</sup> Again, the arrangements varied from country to country. The general principle was to grant to incapacitated foreigners benefits under German employment injury insurance only up to the time that they recrossed the frontier; they were afterwards taken care of by the social insurance institutions of their own countries. Some of the agreements provided that they were entitled to benefit under the legislation of their own countries; others, that they were entitled to benefits under German legislation (which was often more advantageous to the beneficiary). These benefits were to be granted by the foreign institutions on behalf of Germany, which was to make the necessary repayment. Cash allowances and pensions granted under German legislation on employment injury insurance had to be paid partly by the foreign institutions on behalf of, and against repayment by, Germany, and partly by Germany directly.

The German-French agreements contained detailed provisions concerning French workers who returned home because they were suffering from the results of an industrial accident or from occupational disease, but these provisions did not specify whether Germany or France was to pay the expenses. In the occupied zone, until July 1943, the German Sickness Insurance Fund in Paris and its branch offices administered benefits according to German legislation, on behalf of the German insurance funds to which the French beneficiaries were attached while in Germany. The German fund in Paris also paid pensions on behalf of these insurance funds in Germany to workers (or their survivors) in the unoccupied zone. In the unoccupied zone, benefits other than pensions were paid, on behalf of the German funds, by the French *Caisses primaires maladie maternité des assurances sociales*. In certain circumstances, these funds also paid, against repayment by Germany, and under German control, the benefits in kind and cash under French legislation concerning temporary incapacity due to industrial accidents.<sup>2</sup> Under the agreement of 16 May 1943, French institutions were responsible, in the whole of France (except, of course, Alsace-Lorraine) for granting all benefits except pensions (medical care, dental care, hospitalisation, medicine, medical appliances,

<sup>1</sup> Order of 15 May 1941; *ibid.*, p. 472 (3), supplement, 20 May 1942. Danish workers transferred to Germany together with a Danish firm (*Firmeneinsatz*) continued to belong to the Danish employment injury insurance scheme. If they met with an accident or suffered from an occupational disease covered by Danish insurance, the German insurance funds took care of them until they crossed the frontier into Denmark; the Danish institution had to refund the expenses (German-Danish Agreement of 24 February 1942; *Reichsgesetzblatt*, Part II, p. 416).

<sup>2</sup> §§ 14-19 of Agreement of 14 October 1941, and Instructions by the French (Vichy) Secretary of State for Labour of 28 October 1941.

artificial limbs, cash allowances, occupational therapy and re-education, etc.). Pensions were paid on behalf of the German funds, through the intermediary of the German Sickness Fund in Paris.

It should be noted that, as with sickness and maternity insurance, a prerequisite for these benefits was that the French worker must possess, not only an authorisation from the German police and labour administration to return, but also an authorisation from the German employment injury insurance fund to which he had been attached. This second authorisation was often difficult or impossible to obtain. If the patient had not been able to obtain it himself, the French institutions could intervene on his behalf in Germany, but always through the intermediary of the French *Union régionale* in Paris and the German Sickness Fund in Paris. Since many disabled workers (or their survivors) were not receiving benefits because they did not possess the required German documents, the agreement of 11 March 1944<sup>1</sup> provided that the German Sickness Fund in Paris should be entitled to issue those authorisations that could not be obtained from Germany. On the other hand, in order to prevent the victim of the injury or occupational disease from accumulating cash benefits, the amendments of 11 March 1944 provided that the German fund (in Germany) should inform the French fund of the grant of every pension and should start paying the pension only after a lapse of eight weeks after the notification, but that as long as the French institution did not receive the notification from the German fund, the French fund should continue to grant benefits (including cash allowances) according to French legislation.<sup>2</sup>

So far as these benefits were granted by French social insurance institutions on behalf, and under the control, of the Germans, they were entitled to demand repayment from the German fund which, in the individual case, would have been competent if the French beneficiaries had had their residence in Germany. These demands for repayment, as in the case of sickness insurance, were centralised by the *Union régionale* in Paris and the German Sickness Fund in Paris. As long as the military situation allowed, German regulations provided that employment injury pensions should be paid by the German insurance fund to which the individual French worker had been attached while in the Reich. It will require further investigation to ascertain whether the rigid

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<sup>1</sup> Circular Order by the Director of the *Union des caisses*, Paris, of 28 March 1944.

<sup>2</sup> Circular Orders by the Director of the *Union des caisses*, Paris, of 28 March and 20 April 1944.

German clearing and foreign exchange control regulations were set aside in these cases, or whether these payments were made through the *Reichskreditkassen* in France, or through French banks from French funds to Germany's debit in the German-French clearing account.

#### INVALIDITY AND OLD-AGE INSURANCE

Invalidity and old-age insurance benefits in the German social insurance system consisted mainly of pensions granted after extended contributory periods, which only in very few cases were likely to be completed during the war. "So far as old-age and invalidity pensions are concerned, the regulations therefore aim generally at adding the periods for which German pension insurance contributions have been paid, to the waiting periods required by the pension insurance of their own countries; and, furthermore, in certain categories, at granting increases of pensions to the debit of the German pension insurance fund."<sup>1</sup> The same principle was more shortly expressed in the statement that German regulations concerning foreign workers' contributions to German invalidity and old-age insurance generally aimed at "preserving the person's claims under the pension insurance scheme of his own country, by crediting him with the contributions made under the German scheme". In other words, the German authorities endeavoured to induce the old-age and invalidity insurance funds of the foreign countries to credit the accounts of their respective nationals as if the amounts received by the German funds had been received by those non-German funds.<sup>2</sup> The following are two examples.

Under a provisional German-Netherlands agreement published in 1941<sup>3</sup>, the Netherlands Social Insurance Bank (*Ryksversekeringsbank*) undertook the obligation to pay to Netherlands workers who had been officially recruited for work in Germany, or, after their death, to their widows and children, provisional invalidity and old-age pensions, both for the Netherlands and the German insurance periods. The German fund was to pay a proportionate contribution to the Netherlands Social Insurance Bank. It was expressly stipulated that individual workers who, while in Germany, were insured in the German fund (or after their death, their widows and children) should have no claim against it. Definite arrangements concerning pension insurance for German-

<sup>1</sup> FUNKE, *loc. cit.*, p. 31.

<sup>2</sup> *Nachrichtendienst der Deutschen Zeitungsverleger*, 23 Mar. 1944.

<sup>3</sup> Decree by the Reich Minister of Labour, of 23 April 1941; Order by the Secretary-General of the Netherlands Ministry of Social Affairs (The Hague), 20 February 1941 (*Ausländische Arbeiter*, pp. 466,516, supplement, 20 May 1942).

employed Netherlands and their survivors were to be made at a later date.

Similarly, if a French worker, after employment in Germany, (or, in the event of his death, his widow and children) became eligible for invalidity or old-age pension, the French insurance fund had to compute it according to French law. The German-Vichy French agreement of 14 October 1941 stipulated:

20. Workers from France who were employed in Germany and during that period belonged to the German invalidity-old-age insurance for [manual] workers or salaried employees—on the understanding that the computation of the pension in case of coexistence of French and German periods of insurance shall be determined at a later date—shall receive, at the occurrence of the risk, the benefits from the competent French insurance institutions in accordance with the provisions of French legislation.

21. (1). To determine whether the worker is entitled to benefit . . . [and] the amount of the benefit, the French insurance institution shall take into account the insurance periods passed in Germany, in the same manner as its own insurance periods.

.....

22. The German insurance institution shall repay to the French institution the amount by which the pension was increased in consequence of the German insurance periods having been taken into account. That increase shall be calculated by deducting from the amount of the pension . . . the amount which the French institution would have paid had the pension been computed on the basis of the combined insurance periods in Germany and France, [but] only according to the wage earned in France.<sup>1</sup>

These provisions were amended, in some details, by the subsequent German-French agreements, but the important provision in § 20, which left final settlement to an indefinite date, was not changed.

### WAR DAMAGE INSURANCE

On 10 November 1940, detailed regulations were issued concerning indemnities to civilians who suffered injuries from enemy war action, such as bombing attacks. As of right, these benefits were expressly limited to Germans, but foreigners, while not legally entitled to them, were free to apply for them.<sup>2</sup> In no case was an injured worker, German or foreign, entitled to double indemnity; this meant that indemnity could be granted to him either under war insurance, or as employment injury benefit.

The provisions of the Injury of Persons Order of 10 November

<sup>1</sup> § 23 provided that the German and French insurance funds concerned should clear administrative and financial matters through the intermediary of the Reich Insurance Office, and the *Caisse générale de garantie des assurances sociales* in Paris.

<sup>2</sup> *Personenschaden-Verordnung*; *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1940, Part I, p. 1482.

1940 were gradually extended to certain categories of non-Germans; for instance, by agreement between Germany and Denmark of 24 February 1942, to certain categories of Danes working in Germany or Norway, and, a year later, to French civilian workers and released prisoners of war.<sup>1</sup> According to a manual issued by the official Vichy organisation for the information of German-employed French workers<sup>2</sup>, benefits were granted under the war insurance, provided that the damage to the persons was not caused while the persons were at work, or on the way to or from work, or at their camps; in these cases the damage was to be covered by the ordinary employment injury (accident) insurance. But in these cases too, the victim was free to choose benefit under war insurance if it was higher than benefit under employment injury insurance. According to the French manual, the benefits under war insurance which could be claimed, if the victim had obeyed the German air raid precaution regulations, were:

(a) in case of injury, resulting in 100 per cent. permanent incapacity for work: a monthly basic pension of 40 to 50 RM for unmarried persons, 70 RM for childless married persons and 80 RM for married persons with children. Possible additions: occupational indemnity of 10-50 RM; a portion (up to 75 per cent.) of the workers' income before the injury; 100 RM if the accident resulted in blindness; for those who needed another person's assistance: 50-125 RM.

(b) in case of injury resulting in permanent incapacity for work of more than 20 per cent.; according to the degree of incapacity: monthly pension of 15 to 80 RM with a possible addition of 10-20 RM.

(c) in case of death: funeral allowance of 165 RM. The widow was entitled to a pension equal to 60 per cent. of the basic pension and of the occupational indemnity the victim would have received had the accident resulted in 100 per cent. permanent incapacity for work. Every child up to the age of 18 was entitled to an orphan's pension equal to one fifth of the widow's pension, and to one third if the child was orphaned of both parents. The parents of the deceased were entitled to a pension equal to 50 per cent. of the basic pension if the deceased had supported them and if they passed a needs test.

If the death of a Belgian working in Germany resulted from an act of war, the widow was entitled to a pension amounting to 60 per cent. of the old-age pension which would have been payable to the worker himself, but not less than 60 RM per month. The orphan's pension in such a case was 20 per cent. of the widow's pension (*i.e.*, 12 per cent. of the old-age pension to which the deceased worker would have been entitled) and was to be increased to one third of the widow's pension (*i.e.*, 20 per cent. of the father's presumptive old-age pension) in the event of the mother having

<sup>1</sup> Order by the Reich Minister of the Interior of 28 February 1943; Commissariat général à la main-d'œuvre française en Allemagne (Etat français): *Le travail en Allemagne et la famille* (Paris, 1943), pp. 49 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

died previously. The indemnity for funeral expenses varied between 65 and 210 RM.<sup>1</sup>

With the intensification of aerial warfare against Germany the number of victims among foreign workers increased considerably, because they were frequently employed in target areas. Whether and to what extent benefits were granted to injured foreigners continued to depend on the discretion of the German authorities. Early in 1944, Dr. Funke stated in the article which has already been quoted<sup>2</sup> that "whereas foreigners injured by enemy action have no legal claims under the Injury of Persons Order, the German authorities *may* grant them benefits under this Order if the prerequisites are fulfilled".

### POLISH AND SOVIET WORKERS

As already noted, the principal exception to the rule of theoretical equality in social security matters concerned Polish and Soviet workers. Up to a late stage in the war, they were excluded from the equality rule, and also from the obligation to make contributions to the German social security system. They had, instead, to pay special taxes. If, as has been reported, sickness and death rates were highest among Polish and Soviet workers, their need for sickness insurance benefits was all the greater.

In the Government-General, a "social assistance" scheme was introduced, the benefits of which were granted as privileges and on the understanding that no Pole was legally entitled to them. Some measures of assistance were gradually introduced, at least in theory, for larger groups of Polish and Soviet workers. The fact that this was not done until a late stage of the war was officially attributed

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<sup>1</sup> *Le Soir* (Brussels), 13 Sept. 1943. The article also gave details concerning benefits for survivors of Belgians who died from causes other than war injury in Germany. The widow was entitled to a pension equal to one fifth of the wage earned by the deceased during the last year; it was increased to two fifths of the wage if her earning capacity was reduced by at least 50 per cent. owing to illness or infirmity. In addition each child, until completion of his eighteenth year, was to receive an orphan's pension equal to one fifth of his father's last yearly wage, but the total of the combined widow's and orphan's pension was never to exceed 80 per cent. of that wage. Persons who were mainly dependent on a deceased unmarried Belgian worker might claim a pension not exceeding one fifth of the yearly wage. The article also stated that if the death of a German-employed Belgian worker was due to natural causes or to an industrial accident covered by German employment injury insurance, his dependants were entitled to an indemnity for funeral expenses. The amount varied according to the worker's wage; the minimum was 20 times the basic daily wage.

<sup>2</sup> *Neue Internationale Rundschau der Arbeit*, p. 34. This part of the article was also quoted by the *Nachrichtendienst der Deutschen Zeitungsverleger*, of 23 March 1944, which added: "Physical injuries suffered [by foreigners] in air raids could be legally classified as accidents suffered while at work; the benefits of the employment injury insurance scheme are therefore available under certain circumstances".



to "the special conditions prevailing in their own countries". The Soviet worker can be led only gradually towards the social insurance law of the Reich.<sup>1</sup>

Until March 1942 no provision was made for "Eastern" workers who fell sick and therefore were unable to pay for bed and food in their mass quarters. A special scheme was then introduced under which employers of "Eastern" workers had to pay a uniform monthly fee of 4 RM. The money thus collected was to be used for the maintenance and treatment of sick "Eastern" workers. By an Order of 1 August 1942<sup>2</sup> this scheme was retained only for "Eastern" workers in domestic service and was replaced for the other categories by a flexible scale. To prevent employers from turning sick "Eastern" workers out of their quarters, the social insurance funds were ordered to pay the employers a standard daily rate of 1.50 RM for their upkeep.

Under this scheme, the social security funds' hospitals were permitted to accept sick "Eastern" workers. Since this was only a permission and not an obligation, the hospitals often refused to accept them. In the spring of 1943, the Reich Federation of Local Sickness Insurance Funds addressed a circular to its members, advising them that although the admission of "Eastern" workers to hospitals depended on their discretion, that discretion must be "duly" exercised, and requests for admission from "Eastern" workers should not be refused automatically and without examination.<sup>3</sup>

By Order of 30 March 1943 an employment injury (accident) insurance plan was introduced for "Eastern" workers.<sup>4</sup> The service was administered by Reich accident insurance funds and was to consist of medical treatment (nursing was expressly ruled out) and cash benefits of 1.50 RM daily, to be paid directly to the employer who provided board and lodging. Thus, this scheme was also designed to ensure to the employer payment of the standard rate for the worker's maintenance. If the injury resulted in a reduction of more than one third of the worker's earning capacity he was to be entitled to employment injury benefits, such as medical care, but pensions were excluded. If the injury resulted in the worker's death, the widow was entitled to a cash benefit, but not to a pension as long as she was capable of work. Finally, if the incapacitated worker returned to his own country with the consent of the competent German authority, compensation could be paid

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<sup>1</sup> FUNK, *ibid.*, p. 30.

<sup>2</sup> *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, Part II, p. 453.

<sup>3</sup> *Idem*, No. 14, 15 May 1943, Part V, p. 234.

<sup>4</sup> *Reichsgesetzblatt*, No. 33, 31 Mar. 1943, Part I, p. 165.

to him even after his return home.<sup>1</sup> It should be noted, however, that the Order stipulated that none of these benefits could be claimed as of right, but that they were to be granted at the discretion of the Reich accident insurance fund concerned.

These special regulations of 1 August 1942 and 30 March 1943, as amended, were repealed by an Order of 25 March 1944.<sup>2</sup> From 1 April 1944 "Eastern" workers had to pay the regular social security contributions because they were now included in the general German social insurance system. This applied also to "Eastern" workers employed in agriculture and domestic work.<sup>3</sup>

Sickness insurance funds were ordered to provide necessary hospitalisation or care for all foreigners recruited by the German labour administration, if they were in need of treatment. Polish labour in the Government-General and all foreigners employed in their own countries were expressly excluded. The services were to be rendered even if the patients were not entitled to them under the statutory regulations, and to meet the increased costs the labour offices were ordered to pay, for every case, out of the Reich Fund for Manpower Allocation, 15 RM plus the costs, if any, of hospitalisation. Much depended, of course, on the interpretation of the two important qualifications "necessary care" or "need" of treatment, but the sum of 15 RM for all services except actual hospitalisation per case indicates the limited nature of the scheme.

### PREGNANT WOMEN

The basic rules concerning pregnant foreign workers were laid down in a Decree<sup>4</sup> by the Minister of Labour in August 1941. The Decree stated that in most cases, because of the unsuitability of their lodgings, both in agricultural regions and in the (industrial) camps, the women could be delivered only in hospitals or homes, but that they were not in a position to pay the expenses of their confinement. To economise public funds, the following regulations were therefore issued:

(1) As a matter of principle, pregnant foreign workers must be transported back to their own country as soon as the pregnancy becomes known [to the German authorities], however far advanced pregnancy may be at the time that the information is given. Undertakings employing foreign women must therefore be informed that it is their duty to give notice to the labour office at once, as soon as they learn of the pregnancy of any of their foreign female workers.

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<sup>1</sup> "Soziale Verbesserungen für Ostarbeiter", in *Monatshefte für NS-Sozialpolitik*, May 1943, p. 77.

<sup>2</sup> *Reichsgesetzblatt*, Part I, p. 68.

<sup>3</sup> Decree of Reich Minister of Labour, of 20 July 1944; *Ämliche Nachrichten für Reichsversicherung*, No. 22, 10 Aug. 1944, Part II, p. 196.

<sup>4</sup> Decree of 15 August 1941.

(2) An exception to the rule that pregnant foreign women must be transported back to their own countries can be made only if the employer is especially interested in keeping a particular worker and if he assumes a written obligation to the effect that he will assume responsibility for lodging the foreign woman and the expected child . . .

(3) If a foreign female worker cannot be transported back to her own country in time before her delivery because neither the employer nor the labour office has been notified of the prospective childbirth, she must be transported back as soon as she is fit to travel, unless the employer expressly assumes responsibility for lodging the mother with her child. In these cases the child shall not be placed in a children's home unless either the mother or the father of the child or the employer bears the expenses.

Official German opinion differed as to whether pregnant foreigners should be removed at once, regardless of the length of time they had worked in Germany. In December 1942, an official comment on the regulations concerning pregnant foreigners ruled that unmarried expectant mothers should, without exception, be returned to their recruitment districts; but in as much as the employer had to pay for the return journey if the worker had been in his employment for more than six weeks, it was stipulated that the woman must continue to work until six weeks before childbirth.<sup>1</sup> Under the German-French agreement on social insurance of 11 May 1943, the French social insurance institution was entitled to grant maternity benefits on behalf of the German funds to French female workers only if they had left their German place of employment within six weeks of the presumed date of childbirth. On the other hand, Dr. Adam, director of the Munich Labour Office, in his paper on the medical care of foreigners, stated that expectant mothers, whether married or not, must at once be sent back; otherwise, he added, these cases would become public charges, because "the usual result would be that neither the mother nor the father of the child would be able to pay the expenses".

Similarly, there was no uniform practice with regard to the expectant mother who was living in Germany with her husband or family. If she was allowed to remain in Germany despite her pregnancy or if, as frequently happened, a married or unmarried woman concealed her state so long that she could not be transported to her recruitment district, the German regulations required that she be given the "necessary" medical care, while attention and nursing were to be given by fellow countrywomen.<sup>2</sup>

With the intensification of the labour shortage the application of these rules was relaxed. In the first half of 1943, Sauckel decreed

<sup>1</sup> Instructions by the French Ministry of Labour, of 10 June 1943; Circular of the *Union des caisses d'assurances sociales*, Paris, of 31 July 1943.

<sup>2</sup> MENDE, *loc. cit.*, p. 231.

that the regulations of the Maternity Protection Act, 1942<sup>1</sup> (which in 1942 had been extended to cover Italian and Spanish women working in Germany), should apply to women employed in the Reich if they belonged to any of the following nationalities: Bulgar, Croat, Slovak, Hungarian<sup>2</sup>, Danish, Netherlands, Norwegian, Rumanian, Swedish or Swiss. Belgian expectant mothers were also to receive the same preferential treatment if they were in a position to prove their Flemish race (*Volkstum*) by official evidence from Belgium.<sup>3</sup>

Finally, by Order of 8 January 1944, the Act was extended to cover Latvian, Estonian and Finnish women, provided that they were employed in the Reich in accordance with a treaty concluded with their national authorities as recognised by Germany.<sup>4</sup> The benefits of the Act included a weekly subsidy equal to the average wage during the previous 13 weeks (at least 2 RM per day), for six weeks before and six weeks after childbirth, and a daily allowance of 0.50 RM (up to 26 weeks) for women nursing their babies. Since the Maternity Protection Act did not provide for medical care, the Reich Social Insurance Code was declared applicable to foreign women workers, on condition that they had been insured with the German sickness insurance system for at least two years. Most of the wartime treaties concluded by Germany provided, however, that these waiting periods were deemed to have been fulfilled if the women had complied with them at home.

If the foreign woman was able to qualify, she was entitled to the services of a midwife, a contribution towards the expenses of confinement (10-25 RM), medicine and, if necessary, medical care. Hospitalisation was not provided for, but admission to a nursing home was theoretically possible, as was the granting of cash subsidies, or of the services of home nurses. The latter benefits depended on the regulations of the various social insurance funds.<sup>5</sup>

As the list of the privileged nationalities shows, not only were the great masses of Soviet and Polish women excluded, but also French, the majority of Czechoslovak and Yugoslav women, as well as Belgians of Wallon origin, and Jewesses of all nationalities. Even expectant mothers who were entitled to benefits faced extraordinary hardships and difficulties. The bad housing conditions to which the Reich Minister of Labour referred in August 1941 re-

<sup>1</sup> INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE: *Legislative Series*, 1942, Ger. 1; *Gesetz zum Schutze der erwerbstätigen Mutter*, of 17 May 1942; *Reichsgesetzblatt*, No. 53, 18 Jan. 1942, Part I, p. 321, cf. *International Labour Review*, Vol. XLVI, No. 5, Nov. 1942, pp. 598-601, and Vol. L, No. 3, Sept. 1944, pp. 345-348.

<sup>2</sup> *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 4, 5 Feb. 1943, Part V, p. 58.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 14, 15 May 1943, Part III, p. 141.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 8-9, 25 Mar. 1944, Part II, p. 60.

<sup>5</sup> FUNKE, *loc. cit.*, pp. 32-33.

mained, at the best, unchanged during the later war years, and were in most cases as thoroughly unsuitable for infants as they were for women before and after childbirth.

It should be noted that those expectant mothers who were excluded from the benefits of the Maternity Protection Act, were still, under severe penalties<sup>1</sup>, obliged to report their pregnancy to their employer "as soon as they knew of their state"; the employer, in turn, had to report "immediately" to the labour office. Under National Socialist legislation, compulsory notification of pregnancy often amounted to self-incrimination, for a foreign woman was liable to severe punishment if the intercourse had constituted a breach of disciplinary regulations or, much worse, a "race crime" in view of her or the man's origin.

It is true that, apart from this obligatory declaration of pregnancy, the law entitled pregnant women to claim exemption from heavy and dangerous work<sup>2</sup> even though they were excluded from maternity protection, and forbade them to do any work within six weeks after childbirth. But in the absence of any protective measures for these women, such rights were merely theoretical, while the dangers connected with the revelation of pregnancy were very real.

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Special provisions applied to the children of members of the German armed forces in the occupied foreign lands. According to National Socialist racial doctrine, the treatment of both child and mother in these cases differed widely, according to the mother's nationality. The most privileged were Norwegian and Netherlands women who had children by German soldiers or officers. A Decree of 28 July 1942 provided as follows:

1. In order to save and foster racially precious Germanic stock, the Führer hereby declares that children begotten in the occupied Norwegian and Netherlands territories by members of the German Armed Forces and borne to Norwegian or Netherlands women shall be granted, at the request of the mothers, special assistance and care by the offices of the Reich Commissioners for the Occupied Norwegian and Netherlands territories respectively.

2. (1) This care includes payment of confinement expenses, payment of subsidies to the mothers for the period before and after childbirth, payment of subsidies for the children, the placing of the mothers in clinics or institutions and

<sup>1</sup> Introduced by Administrative Order of 17 May 1942, accompanying the Maternity Protection Act of the same date (*Reichsgesetzblatt*, No. 53, 18 May 1942, Part I, p. 324). Both the Act and the Order came into effect on 1 July 1942.

<sup>2</sup> The types of work from which pregnant women were exempt, whether or not they were covered by the Maternity Protection Act, were enumerated in the Administrative Order of 17 May 1942.

also, with the consent of the mothers, the placing of the children in homes, and similar measures.

3. (1) The care provided for mothers and children is designed to protect the mothers from any disadvantage and to foster the development of the children.

(2) If the mother so desires, she shall be assigned to appropriate employment.<sup>1</sup>

German regulations endeavoured to achieve two aims simultaneously: to increase the birthrate of the stock considered racially desirable, and to induce the women concerned, either before or after childbirth, to come to Germany for employment.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, the tendency to protect members of the armed forces (who could decline fatherhood by successfully claiming the defence of *plurimum concubentium*)<sup>3</sup> restricted the application of the policy.

### CONCLUSIONS

The treatment of foreign workers with respect to social insurance presents a complicated picture. However, the following features are outstanding.

(1) Social security contributions from foreign workers provided the Reich with considerable revenue. No statistics are available, but it is certain that the contributions deducted from the wages and salaries of western workers during the war years were higher than the taxes paid to Germany by these workers. On the other hand, since Polish and Soviet workers during the greater part of the war did not pay social security contributions (the particularly high deductions from their wages and salaries were classified as taxes) it is uncertain whether the sum total of social security contributions paid by all foreign workers would prove to be greater than the sum total of all taxes paid by them.

(2) The benefits and services received by foreign workers and their families and survivors from German social insurance funds were far from commensurate with their contributions.

(3) Germany received social insurance contributions from the foreigners, but systematically directed their claims for social insurance benefits to the foreign and not the German fund.

<sup>1</sup> This Decree was signed by Adolph Hitler, the Chief of the Supreme Command of the *Wehrmacht*, Keitel, and the Chief of the (Party) Reich Chancellery, Lammers (*Verordnungsblatt für die besetzten Norwegischen Gebiete*, No. 7, 26 Oct. 1942, pp. 21-22).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Order by the Reich Commissioner for the Occupied Norwegian Territories, of 26 October 1943; *ibid.*, No. 1, 14 Jan. 1944, pp. 1-3.

<sup>3</sup> § 4 of the Decree of the Chief of the Supreme Command of the *Wehrmacht*, of 13 February 1943; *ibid.*, No. 6, 29 June 1943. The German War Cabinet's Decree of 9 March 1943 for the protection of marriage, family and motherhood (*Reichsgesetzblatt*, 16 Mar. 1943, Part I, p. 141), authorised the Reich Minister of Justice to issue general exemptions from its provisions for those who violated the Decree with respect to non-German women, and provided that such exemptions need not be published in the official gazette.

(4) In various German-dominated countries, in fact, the Germans often induced the national social insurance funds to extend services and benefits to the dependants of their nationals employed in Germany.

(5) The policy of requiring the social insurance funds in the workers' own countries to grant services and benefits to their nationals caused an additional strain on these institutions and in general on the national resources of the countries involved.

(6) There is every reason to fear that many workers who had been employed in Germany will return to their own countries in impaired health. The German system of exploiting large numbers of non-Germans for their war effort will thus have produced the result that many foreign workers on their return home will be worse risks than they would have been in normal circumstances.

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## CHAPTER XV

### INDUSTRIAL EXPERIENCE FOR FOREIGN WORKERS

As was said at the beginning of this report, German war economy was in two respects an economy of scarcity. There was a scarcity of raw materials and a scarcity of skilled labour. Apart from geopolitical and racial aims, the idea behind the importation of foreign labour to Germany was to solve these two problems by the use of an abundant supply of unskilled labour.

Even if the Third Reich's policy of coercion of labour had not wasted manpower, the production of essential war goods in Germany would still have frequently required more man-hours than in countries better supplied with raw materials, because the manufacture of substitutes demands more manpower than production or importation of the genuine raw materials. In addition, a considerable waste of manpower, expressed in the number of man-hours needed per unit of output, is unavoidable if unskilled or semi-skilled workers have to be trained to do the work because skilled workers are not available in sufficient numbers.

The industrial leaders of Germany were aware of this situation. The Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Gustloff Works at Weimar, Beckurts, writing in the official publication of the German Labour Administration<sup>1</sup>, as early as the autumn of 1942 expressed the views of German industry:

The workers which industry would like to have are no longer available. Most of the workers who are normally available today can hardly qualify as first class, either physically, or as far as their professional qualifications are concerned.

In view of this situation, German labour policy had to undergo a very remarkable change during the war. The German labour administration went on bringing foreign workers into the German war economy regardless of their skills, abilities, or even capacity to learn. At the same time they were compelled by the increasingly critical manpower situation to ensure fuller use of the skilled workers available and to encourage the training of unskilled foreigners. At first, semi-skilled foreigners were

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<sup>1</sup> *Arbeitseinsatz und Arbeitslosenhilfe*, No. 19-23, Oct. 1942.



put in the places of skilled German workers who could be more usefully employed in other jobs. This, however, was not enough. In 1942 the administration's most urgent task was to increase the number of metal workers, a task that had to be carried out by training workers who were unskilled or who were skilled in other occupations.<sup>1</sup>

Official orders<sup>2</sup> emphasised the considerable expense and effort incurred by undertakings in training unskilled foreigners. In a report of November 1942, the economic section of the *Frankfurter Zeitung*<sup>3</sup> pointed out that "younger workers from the East can, if they show willingness, be trained for semi-skilled work in three to four months". A German business leader, General Director Zangen, stated at the end of 1942 that Germany had by that time trained and adjusted "hundreds of thousands of specialised European workers".<sup>4</sup> He repeated, early in 1943, that Germany had, to a large extent, become the "apprentice workshop of Europe".<sup>5</sup>

This policy was continued in 1943 and was accentuated in 1944. The Commissioner-General for Manpower announced in April 1943<sup>6</sup> that it was "necessary to train the greatest possible number of specialists (assistant locksmiths, assistant turntable workers, assistant hole cutters, assistant electricians)" and stressed the necessity of making "most careful ability tests". He also stated that "if the training of foreigners, who so far have been used only for simpler work, promises better results [than the training of Germans] then foreigners must be given opportunities of special training".

This policy entailed the training of agricultural or unskilled labourers for semi-skilled or skilled industrial jobs. The *Deutsche Bergwerks-Zeitung* of 9 March 1943<sup>7</sup>, for example, discussed how to ensure "the highest possible efficiency among the many foreigners who previously were not employed as workers or who are not acquainted with machinery and industrial work. It is recommended that the necessary steps be taken for their training." The difficulties encountered in this programme were, obviously, considerable: "The training is particularly successful if the teacher masters the

<sup>1</sup> Dr. TIMM, in *Arbeitseinsatz und Arbeitslosenhilfe*, Oct.-Nov. 1942, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> For example, Order by the Commissioner-General for Manpower, of 14 September 1942; *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, Part I, p. 428.

<sup>3</sup> Heddy NEUMEISTER: "Europas mobile Arbeitskraft", in *Die Wirtschaftskurve*, published in collaboration with the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, Nov. 1942, pp. 228 *et seq.*

<sup>4</sup> Quoted by MANSFELD in *Deutsches Arbeitsrecht*, Jan. 1943, p. 11.

<sup>5</sup> Quoted in an article, "Arbeitseinsatz aus gesamteuropäischer Perspektive", in *Soziale Praxis*, Mar. 1943, p. 110.

<sup>6</sup> *Deutsches Arbeitsrecht*, p. 53; also Decree of 16 February 1943 (*Reichsarbeitsblatt*, Part I, p. 157).

<sup>7</sup> Cf. also *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 25 Sept. 1942, Part V, p. 9.

elementary expressions of the trainees' native language. In particular, he must himself have a good knowledge of the machinery, tools, danger points and safety measures. If some plants lack technically trained interpreters they should ask for them from the *Gau* Office of the German Labour Front."

In the autumn of 1943, the Junkers Works started a two-year training programme for 60 Netherlands boys of 14, who were transported for the purpose from the Netherlands to Dessau. Dr. Mittweg, Head of the Department for Social Administration at the Reich Commissariat, stated, in a speech at the Junkers Works' Office in Amsterdam, that this was to be the beginning of a large-scale German training programme for non-German apprentices, undertaken on the orders of the Commissioner-General for Manpower. The *Deutsche Zeitung in den Niederlanden* of 20 September 1943, observed that this programme "is rather expensive and must be regarded as an additional burden on German undertakings", which, however, considered such a programme necessary, in order to secure a larger supply of skilled labour when the war was over.

During 1944, as the available manpower diminished, increased efforts were made to improve the output of foreign workers by means of free training courses. Dr. Speer organised free training courses for chauffeurs in the occupied territories.<sup>1</sup> Dr. Robert Ley said in his May Day manifesto of 1944: "The places of men who are called to the colours are, to a very large extent, taken by women and by foreign workers who must be first trained, instructed and gradually educated to higher achievement". In an article entitled "Mobilisation of Manpower Reserves in Undertakings", in a leading organ of German heavy industry<sup>2</sup>, a high party official wrote:

Since so many foreigners were working in German undertakings, they, too, had to receive vocational training in order to achieve maximum output . . . For this purpose the German Labour Front organised special courses for foreigners in which they were taught German and were encouraged to make proposals for the improvement of production. Steps must also be taken to ensure that German foremen fulfil their duties in controlling foreigners; it was moreover necessary to find, among the ranks of the most efficient and loyal foreign workers, foremen who, under German supervision, could be put in charge of foreign workers.

At about the same time, the official Four-Year Plan publication printed a report from the Head of the Office for Increased Performance, Vocational Training and Industrial Management of the German Labour Front, describing the "increased performance

<sup>1</sup> *Essener National-Zeitung*, 3 Feb. 1944.

<sup>2</sup> *Deutsche Bergwerks-Zeitung*, 18 Apr. 1944.

scheme".<sup>1</sup> According to this report, over 1,200 training centres were then engaged in the training of men and women workers, either in the plants in which they were employed or outside the plants, in afternoon and evening sessions. The staff consisted of 19,200 instructors. For foreign workers, 600 to 800 special training groups were being started every month.<sup>2</sup>

Each training group contained workers of only one nationality and, after some experimenting, the number in each group was cut down to 20.<sup>3</sup> The German press reported that the training of French and Czech workers proved particularly successful.<sup>4</sup>

The magnitude and the novel character of the scheme make it difficult to predict its ultimate effects in the post-war era. But it seems that an important result, unintended by the Third Reich, will be an increase in the proportion of skilled and semi-skilled workers, particularly among the less industrialised European nations.

#### FOREIGN PREFERENCE FOR INDUSTRIAL EMPLOYMENT

It is interesting to note that this development was facilitated by the foreigners themselves. Many labour recruits deported to Germany for agricultural work desired to shift to industrial work. In the earlier stages of the war this tendency caused the German authorities considerable concern. In a circular Order of 6 March 1941<sup>5</sup>, the Reich Minister of Labour pointed out that it had been found in 1940 that an increasing number of foreigners were moving from agriculture to industry; many, indeed, "had obviously contemplated such a step even before they came to Germany". Agricultural labourers who had behaved satisfactorily, the Minister stated, had been encouraged to switch to industry because they could earn higher wages there; "such tendencies must be opposed with the utmost severity". Since no foreigner could change his employment without the consent of the labour office, the Minister threatened to take severe steps against officials who encouraged the movement of foreigners away from the farms.

Nine months later<sup>6</sup>, however, the Minister complained that the number of foreign agricultural workers attempting to shift to industry had not decreased and that "this led to a dangerous

<sup>1</sup> MESSERIUS: in *Der Vierjahresplan*, quoted by *Nachrichtendienst der Deutschen Zeitungsverleger*, 1 Mar. 1944.

<sup>2</sup> In August 1944, the number of training groups organised for foreign workers was 510; *Nachrichten -und Pressedienst* (news service of the German Foreign Office), 8 Nov. 1944.

<sup>3</sup> *Nachrichten -und Pressedienst*, 21 July 1944.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 658 (2), supplement, 15 Sept. 1942.

<sup>6</sup> Circular Order of 18 December 1941; *ibid.*, p. 658 (3), supplement, 15 Sept. 1942.

situation in agriculture". He therefore ordered that foreign agricultural labourers should be allowed to shift to industrial employment only if they "were no longer physically capable of doing agricultural work". In these cases, special permits were required, to be granted by the district labour offices, which, if necessary, required an affidavit by an authorised physician. The Minister further decided that it should be illegal for foreign agricultural workers who had duly completed their obligations in Germany to seek employment in German industry instead of returning home, since the inevitable result would be a decreasing supply of foreign agricultural workers for Germany. Applications for special permits for foreign agricultural workers to seek employment in German industry instead of returning home had therefore to be submitted to the Minister himself.<sup>1</sup>

As time went on, this policy could no longer be continued. The increasing shortage of labour induced the German authorities to extend the original contracts of foreign agricultural workers for unlimited periods. On the other hand, fewer and fewer efforts were made to counteract the trend towards industry.

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 85, second supplement, 20 July 1942.

## CHAPTER XVI

### THE LEGACY OF THE SYSTEM

The preceding chapters describe the measures adopted by National Socialist Germany to increase its labour supply during the war, by recruiting large numbers of foreign workers for employment both in the Reich itself and in countries under its domination.

Every phase of this vast scheme of European-wide labour mobilisation was shrewdly planned and ruthlessly carried out. One of the first tasks of the German authorities, when they took over the control of a conquered territory and began to recruit labour, was to install their own labour offices or to adapt those already in existence. This was done in Poland even before the end of the campaign of September 1939, and it was repeated with monotonous regularity in 1940 to 1942 as the German tide of conquest rolled onwards. An air of legality was given to the recruitment by the negotiation of bilateral agreements with the Governments of allied and neutral States and wherever possible with the authorities of the occupied countries. Great pressure was brought to bear on the workers in the occupied countries to register voluntarily for work in, or for, Germany, and, since those who refused experienced much difficulty in obtaining any other employment, the temptation to register must have been considerable. Nevertheless, the number of foreign workers who genuinely volunteered was very small and the great majority of them were in fact conscripted for the purpose of adding, by their labour, to the productive capacity of their country's enemy.

These workers came from every part of Europe, and their numbers ran into many millions. Their conditions of life and labour varied considerably, according to place and type of employment, phase of the war, and, particularly, nationality. Those from the East were treated worst of all; those from other parts of Europe received less inhuman treatment. But no-one who reads these pages with care can help coming to the conclusion that even in the most favourable cases their conditions resembled slavery and the general picture is one of arbitrariness, oppression and humiliation.

The compulsory mobilisation of the civilian population in coun-

tries under wartime occupation is almost without precedent in modern times and it would be necessary to go back a long way in history to find anything comparable on a large scale. There has, however, been one example in the recent past, namely, the deportation of Belgian workers during the First World War. On that occasion, means were found of defeating the efforts of the German Government and putting a stop to the deportations after a comparatively short time.<sup>1</sup> Yet, as an impartial observer wrote almost a decade later, that scheme "had considerable consequences for the Belgian people as a whole because their physical and social conditions were profoundly affected by it during and after the war".<sup>2</sup> During the present conflict, on the other hand, the deportation of labour, which was carried out on an incomparably larger scale and with even greater ruthlessness, lasted throughout the war.

The tremendous accession to German manpower would, it was confidently hoped in the Third Reich, enable production to be maintained at such a level as to ensure armament superiority and military victory for Germany. In this the Germans were of course disappointed. It is, however, beyond doubt that this army of foreign labour brought great advantages to Germany in increasing its productive capacity. On the other hand, there were also certain disadvantages which are less often mentioned, but which were of considerable importance. For instance, the Germans had to create a huge machine for the control of the foreign workers. Nevertheless, the labour recruits were obviously in a position to slow down production and even to effect actual sabotage and it can hardly be doubted that in spite of very strict German supervision they took advantage of their opportunities, though to what extent cannot be determined at present.

In the occupied countries themselves, however, the results were both more serious from the German point of view and much more unexpected. Evasion of forced labour led the peoples of those countries to passive, and later to active, resistance, and it can be stated with confidence that the birth of the Maquis in France and of similar resistance movements in other countries was due in large measure to the compulsory recruitment imposed by Germany. When workers had a choice between forced labour in the enemy country and participation in a campaign, however dangerous, for the liberation of their own, the most active and most intelligent did not hesitate.

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix VIII.

<sup>2</sup> James T. SHOTWELL, in Fernand PASSELECQ: *Déportation et travail forcé des ouvriers et de la population civile de la Belgique occupée (1916-1918)* (Paris-New Haven, 1927), p. XI.

Many people in Germany believed that the foreign workers, when brought into touch with German methods of production and German organisation, would be filled with admiration for the country able to achieve such things and would become partisans of a European new order under German leadership and control. In fact, the results are likely to be the exact opposite. All the indications are that these men and women and, indeed, children too, have emerged from their experiences with hatred against the system of bondage under which they lived and worked, and against those responsible for such a system.

At the same time, many of the workers have, while in German employment, received a training in skilled or semi-skilled operations; and this will be very valuable both to themselves and to their countries, especially if the latter have hitherto been predominantly agricultural and seek to increase their industrial capacity in the years to come.

Many problems raised by this mass displacement and exploitation of labour have had to be solved since the countries occupied by Germany were liberated, but there are others which will require years to settle.

The first problem, in point of time, was of course the collection of the workers concerned in suitable centres and their repatriation. It is likely that this first problem will be well on the way to solution by the time this report appears. In this connection, reference may be made to the resolution concerning measures for the protection of transferred foreign workers and of foreign workers' and employers' organisations, adopted by the International Labour Conference at Philadelphia in May 1944. In it the Conference recommended that:

1. Precautions should be taken, subject to the removal of all officials identified with the former totalitarian régime, to ensure that the administrative machinery set up by the former régime for handling questions connected with the utilisation of foreign labour power, together with all its records and documents, is for the time being preserved intact. In particular, the United Nations and the occupying authorities should make it clear that the personnel concerned will be held individually responsible for the preservation of such documents and records and that persons convicted of destroying or concealing them will be severely punished.

2. Pending the repatriation of foreign workers, which should be carried out with the greatest possible speed, the competent occupation authority should take appropriate action for the purpose of protecting such workers in regard to their feeding, accommodation, health, safety, welfare and general interests.

3. All discriminatory treatment in respect of remuneration, the right to employment, conditions of employment, the wearing of distinctive badges, etc., on account of race, national or local origin, or religion, should be immediately abolished.

4. The competent occupation authority should in the matters concerning foreign workers in Axis nations collaborate with the Governments and trade unions of Allied countries.

A second problem is concerned with possible compensation, which, as a part of a more general question, the Governments of the liberated countries and, in fact, of the United Nations as a whole, may wish to consider. One aspect of this problem, namely, the situation of the social insurance funds, is under consideration by a special committee appointed by the Governing Body of the I.L.O. Another aspect is the debt incurred by Germany through wage transfers within the framework of the German wartime clearing system. There are also large amounts of money which belong to foreign workers and are deposited in frozen accounts in German banks or invested in German savings bonds. Further, many deportees did not survive the harsh treatment and heavy work, and measures are needed to help their dependants. In the examination of these questions, the facts contained in the present report may prove useful to the Governments and to the private organisations concerned.

What is of immediate importance to the liberated workers themselves is an assurance that they will be properly cared for and provided with suitable employment. All these persons need rest and the chance to recover from the hardships they have suffered. Many of them will be broken in health and will need medical care. Those fit for work will need employment in useful occupations, just as their war-torn countries need their productive capacities. In order to achieve that objective, not merely in the transition period, but in the long run as well, it is essential that measures be adopted to ensure a high general level of employment. If the general demand for labour is high, a solution of the problems of particular groups, even of such large groups as those referred to here, is relatively easy. For that purpose, it is necessary to have not only measures of national scope in each of the countries concerned but also wide international co-operation in the social and economic fields.

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## APPENDIX I

### ORGANISATION OF THE GERMAN-OCCUPIED EASTERN TERRITORIES

After the termination of Germany's campaign against Poland in 1939, western Poland and a large part of central Poland, comprising altogether some 36,000 square miles, with a pre-war population of some 10 million, were incorporated into the Reich. Administratively, this was effected by adding the Polish areas of Ciechanow and Plock to the German province of East Prussia, and Polish East Upper Silesia to the German province of West Upper Silesia, and by transforming the Polish provinces of Poznan and Pomorze and the greater part of Lodz province into two new German administrative areas (*Gaue*), *Wartheland* and "Danzig-West Prussia". All these annexed territories were to be completely germanised.

The remainder of the Polish territory occupied by Germany in 1939 (some 37,000 square miles, with a pre-war population of some 11.4 million), was, with the exception of the territory of Bialystok, also incorporated in the Reich as a dependent territory. It was administered by a German Governor-General, Hans Frank, appointed by Adolf Hitler, and by a special German administration. In order to obliterate the name of Poland, the region was officially called the "Government-General". The status of the Government-General differed greatly from that of the so-called Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia (comprising part of Czechoslovakia), where a native administration continued to function, although under complete German control. In the Government-General, no native Polish administration existed throughout the five years of German rule.<sup>1</sup>

After the German attack on the U.S.S.R., the territory of the Government-General was increased by the addition of the former Polish south-eastern provinces of Lwow, Tarnopol and Stanislawow, to approximately 61,000 square miles, with a population estimated, by the Polish Ministry of Information (London) in January 1942, at some 21 million.

In contrast to the German-annexed parts of pre-war Poland which were to be germanised, and the German population of which

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<sup>1</sup> The Government-General "is distinguished very essentially from a Protectorate by the circumstance that the German administration in the Government-General is not a supervisory administration over a non-German State administration, but is itself the State Administration, right down to the lowest unit". (Under-Secretary of State Ernst KUNDT, in *Berliner Börsen-Zeitung*, 30 Nov. 1941, quoted in *Polish Fortnightly Review*, published by the Polish Ministry of Information (London), No. 37, 1 Feb. 1942, p. 2.)

was therefore favoured in every respect, the Government-General was to be reserved for persons considered by the Germans to be ethnically Poles, and was subjected to a régime of deliberate ruthlessness. The territory of Białystok, including the towns of Łomża and Białystok, was formed into a special administrative area governed from Königsberg in East Prussia. All the other German-occupied territories in the east of Europe, including the former Polish provinces of Polesie and Volhynia, the Baltic Republics of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania, White Russia, the Ukraine and all other parts of the Soviet Union occupied by the Germans, were administered partly by the German military authorities, and partly by the Reich Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories under Alfred Rosenberg.

As in the case of Poland, the Germans endeavoured to obliterate the names of these territories. In official German usage, the occupied territories to the east of the annexed parts of Poland and of the Government-General, were called the "Eastern Territories" (*Ostland*). The workers imported from these regions were called "Eastern" workers. But the nomenclature was not always precise. Polish workers from the German-annexed provinces and from the Government-General were frequently included among "Eastern" workers and all occupied territories lying to the east of the pre-1939 German frontiers were often called "Eastern territories". In the Eastern Territories, as in the Government-General, the German occupation authorities abolished the native administration. The German régime in these territories was characterised by even greater ruthlessness than in western Poland and the Government-General.

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## APPENDIX II

### THE EXPLOITATION OF JEWS

Each time that Germany brought a foreign country under its occupation or control one of its first steps was to impose National Socialist anti-Jewish doctrines with relentless vigour.<sup>1</sup> The National Socialist definition of Jews applied irrespective of citizenship, nationality and, in fact, religious creed. If the four grandparents of a person were "racially fully Jewish" or if one grandparent was "Aryan" and three were "racially fully Jewish", that person, under National Socialist law, was "fully Jewish".<sup>2</sup>

Before the war, the employment of Jews in Germany was prohibited. "As early as the year 1938, Jews were, to all intents and purposes, completely excluded from employment. This is also true of Jews who were employers."<sup>3</sup> When the war brought large masses of non-German Jews under German rule, two policies were simultaneously adopted: they were prohibited from continuing their occupations; and they were used for forced labour. Whenever the régime decided to utilise the productive capacities of Jews, the conditions under which they had to work were inhuman. Their work was a form of punishment. The economic result was therefore entirely out of proportion, as a rule, to the hardship inflicted on the victims.

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<sup>1</sup> Another group which fell under the full impact of National Socialist race doctrine and was treated, so far as labour regulations were concerned, in the same way as Jews, was Gypsies. Professor W. SIEBERT of the Law Faculty of the University of Berlin explained that "the blood currents which can be traced in the mixed Gypsy race are those of Asia Minor, India and the Mediterranean area. It is the task of the Reich Central Agency for the Campaign against the Gypsy Way of Life (*Reichszentrale zur Bekämpfung des Zigeunerunwesens*), in collaboration with the Research Institute for Race Hygiene in the Reich Health Department, to determine who is to be considered a Gypsy". Under an Order by Heinrich Himmler of 7 August 1941 (*Ausländische Arbeiter*, pp. 49 and 53), racial diagnosis had to distinguish between full Gypsies (category Z), persons with prevalently Gypsy blood (category Z plus), and persons whose blood was half Gypsy and half German (category ZM). Later, a category ZM minus (persons whose blood was prevalently German) was added. "All provisions concerning the labour and social conditions of Jews apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to Gypsies. Hence, their employment status is of a special kind, outside the German social order" (SIEBERT, *loc. cit.*, p. 840). Some exceptions were granted to the category ZM minus (Order by the Commissioner-General for Manpower, of 21 June 1942, *loc. cit.*, p. 854, supplement, 30 Aug. 1942). According to the available information, few of the European Gypsies who fell under German rule have survived.

<sup>2</sup> Persons with two "racially fully Jewish" and two "Aryan" grandparents were defined as "half Jews" or "first degree mixed", unless for special reasons, for example, marriage to a "full Jew", they were considered as "full Jews". Persons with only one "racially fully Jewish" and three "Aryan" grandparents were called "quarter Jews" or "second degree mixed". Persons considered as half or quarter Jews were not subject to the provisions concerning Jewish labour.

<sup>3</sup> *Kommentar zur Reichsverteidigungsgesetzgebung*, Vol. I, Part 2, *Juden*, p. 11.

In the Government-General, two Orders were issued on 26 October 1939, one prescribing compulsory labour service (*Arbeitspflicht*) for Poles and one introducing "forced labour" (*Arbeitszwang*); this second term emphasised the penal character of the measure for Jews. Whereas the first Order mentioned that Poles should be entitled to "equitable" pay, the regulations for the forced labour of the Jews contained no reference to payment. An Order of 12 December 1939<sup>1</sup> stipulated that all Jewish inhabitants of the Government-General between 14 and 60 years of age were liable to forced labour, normally for a period of two years. But the duration of the forced labour was lengthened if the "educational purpose" was not attained within that period. If the German authorities so decided, even the sick and disabled ("those not fully capable") were to be assigned to activities "according to their capacities". Handicraftsmen, especially owners of shops, were compelled to deliver their entire equipment when reporting for forced labour. The Order also provided that Jews who were called up for forced labour were to be put into labour camps. According to the available information, conditions in these camps hardly differed from those in concentration camps.

Other forms of forced labour were organised in the ghettos which were established by the Germans, at first in the German-incorporated Polish provinces and in the Government-General and, after the invasion of the Soviet Union, in the western Ukraine. Not only Jews who, before the war, had lived east of Germany's borders, but Jews from other German-occupied countries, as well as from "Greater Germany", were herded into these places. Although large contingents were taken at intervals from the ghettos into forced labour camps (for example, according to one report<sup>2</sup>, more than 100,000 Jews, of 15 to 60 years of age, were moved out of Warsaw in the summer of 1941), the Institute of Jewish Affairs in New York estimated that, despite the high death rate, the number of Jews held in German-established ghettos in the eastern territories was "no less than one million" in November 1941 and had increased to one and a half million in the early summer of 1942.<sup>3</sup>

Some of the ghetto population were forced into gangs which worked for German civilian or military authorities. Others were forcibly organised in "producers' co-operatives".<sup>4</sup> In the autumn of 1941, a Cologne newspaper stated<sup>5</sup> that in the Polish ghettos

<sup>1</sup> This Order, dated Cracow, 12 December 1939, was signed by Krüger, Chief Director of the S.S. and Police (*Verordnungsblatt für die besetzten Polnischen Gebiete*, 1939, p. 246, quoted by Raphael LEMKIN: *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe* (Washington, D.C., 1944), p. 544).

<sup>2</sup> *Jewish Telegraph Agency*, 30 July 1941.

<sup>3</sup> *Contemporary Jewish Record*, Feb. 1942, quoted by Eugene KULISCHER, *op. cit.*, p. 108. For further information on the displacement and treatment of Jews in German-dominated Europe, see *ibid.*, pp. 95-116.

<sup>4</sup> Under the title "Jews at Work: Jewish Dexterity Used for Productive Purposes", the *Deutsche Zeitung* (Budapest) of 26 June 1942 reported on arrangements in Bochnia, in the province of Cracow. These were considered exemplary. Eight hundred Jews, among them physicians and lawyers, were engaged in such tasks as "working on old clothes which no tailor would ever have repaired".

<sup>5</sup> *Kölnische Zeitung*, 5 Sept. 1941.

400,000 Jews, working in special workshops managed by German commissioners, produced goods for the German army and other essential war products. In an address delivered in November 1941, the governor of the *Warthegau* stated that 180,000 Jews were working in the ghetto of Lodz.<sup>1</sup> At that period, German manufacturers were officially urged to place orders with the Jewish artisans and co-operatives in the Warsaw ghetto. A special office of the German administration in Warsaw advised on the placing of orders, and a circular pointed out that 40 per cent. of the 500,000 Jews in Warsaw were skilled craftsmen, particularly tailors, leather workers, tilers and joiners. The mayor of the town of Warta inserted the following advertisement in the *Litzmannstädter Zeitung* (a German newspaper in Lodz): "I am in charge of 250 qualified Jewish tailors, hatters and furriers; I undertake all sorts of work for military and civilian customers".<sup>2</sup>

The work in the ghettos was either under the control of S. S. troopers or of employees of the German labour administration, assisted by S. S. men. In the summer of 1942, for example, it was reported that 60,000 Jews in the Warsaw ghetto, mainly tailors, shoemakers, furriers and tinsmiths, were placed under the supervision of German Labour Front employees—3 directors and 60 assistants—who had been specially assigned to this task.<sup>3</sup> Instead of, or in addition to, direct German supervision, less direct forms of compulsion were often used. The whole ghetto, or part of it, or prominent members of the Jewish community, were held collectively responsible for the output demanded by the Germans, and frightful reprisals were inflicted in case of non-compliance. The working time of Jewish tailors organised by the German authorities for the manufacture of uniforms for the *Luftwaffe* was 12 to 18 hours a day. Living and working conditions were also appalling. Jewish workers were starved; one of the differences between the treatment of Jews and that of other foreign workers was that neither the German authorities nor German employers made any provision for their feeding.

There is little information to show whether they received pay or not. Three methods were used. One consisted in paying no wages to Jews, and thus forcing the Jewish community to care for them. For example, the German Commissioner-General in Riga issued the following Order on 19 March 1942<sup>4</sup>, for the General District of Latvia:

"1. Jews shall receive no wages.

<sup>1</sup> *Jewish Telegraph Agency*, 26 Nov. 1941. At that time, the ghetto of Lodz was the largest ghetto in the *Warthegau*, and thus the largest in "Greater Germany". (Other German-established ghettos, e.g., in the Government-General, at times held many more persons, but they were outside "Greater Germany".) When the policy of "liquidation" of the ghettos began, the first to be "liquidated" were those in the *Warthegau*. However, according to information emanating from Germany in the early spring of 1945, more than 100,000 Jews from all parts of Europe were still employed in coal mines in German-annexed Polish Upper Silesia before the Soviet break-through.

<sup>2</sup> *Jewish Telegraph Agency*, 16 Feb. 1942.

<sup>3</sup> *Idem*, 7 June 1942.

<sup>4</sup> *Deutsche Zeitung im Osten*, 31 Mar. 1942, quoted by Raphael LEMKIN, *op. cit.*, p. 341.

"2. (1) Employers of Jewish labour shall pay a fee to the Financial Department of the competent District Commissioner, which shall be in accordance with the wage rates established in the General Decree of the Reich Commissioner for the Eastern Territories of 21 November 1941, concerning native labour in public services and in trade. The District Commissioner shall issue special provisions concerning these payments.

"(2) For overtime work, or for work on Sundays, holidays and at night, which may be required only with the consent of the District Commissioner (through the labour office), no extra fee shall be paid.

"3. Violation of this regulation shall be punishable by imprisonment or fine, or both."

A second method, which was really only a variation on the first, was to levy contributions from a part of the ghetto population with which to pay persons working for the Germans. Thirdly, wages were sometimes paid by the German employers or authorities, but "in blocked Reichsmarks redeemable at stores usually devoid of food by the time that Jews were allowed to shop".<sup>1</sup>

In the occupied territories of western Europe, Jews were also subjected to cruel persecutions from the outset. In the earlier stages of the war, however, it appears that they were seldom put to forced labour unless they were sent into concentration camps. In the concentration camps of western Europe—that at Tervueren in Belgium was particularly notorious—working conditions were little better than in the concentration camps in the East. In 1941 and 1942, the forced labour of "free" Jews increased. Their numbers dwindled, however, partly as a result of persecution, and partly because Jews from occupied western countries, as well as from all other territories occupied or dominated by Germany, were systematically transported to the East.

In the labour conditions of Jews in "Greater Germany" the National Socialist Government made no distinction between Reich German or Austrian or Sudeten Jews and the small contingents of Jews from occupied countries who were deported for work to "Greater Germany".<sup>2</sup> They were all considered as the lowest group of foreign workers. They were assigned to the most strenuous or most dangerous types of work. Various authorities, especially labour trustees and S. S. officials, issued, at their own discretion, divergent regulations for the employment of Jews. In order to unify these rules, an Order on the employment status of Jews in Germany was issued, on 31 October 1941<sup>3</sup>, by the Reich Minister of Labour, in agreement with the Chief of the Party Chancellery and the Reich Minister of the Interior. The most important provisions in this Order were those dealing with assignment to work, suspension of industrial safety measures and wages.

<sup>1</sup> Information issued by the Polish Information Centre, New York, 8 Jan. 1941.

<sup>2</sup> The following section refers to "Greater Germany" west of the pre-1939 Polish-German border (that is, without the Polish territories incorporated by the Reich).

<sup>3</sup> *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 4 Nov. 1941, Part I, p. 681. Cf. INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE: *Legislative Series*, 1941, Ger. 4 (B).

This Order allowed no exceptions concerning minimum or maximum age, sex, or health, and required Jews to accept any work assigned to them. The assignments were to be made by the labour offices. The duration of the assignment was not limited. Except with special permission, Jews had to work in segregated groups or gangs. If ordered to work elsewhere than at their place of residence, they had to be lodged in quarters separate from those of other German or foreign workers. Young Jews were excluded from the legal provisions concerning the protection of young workers. For all Jews, the industrial inspection offices were authorised to issue "special provisions concerning safety measures differing from the existing regulations". In other words, with the consent of the Industrial Inspection Service, safety regulations could be disregarded.<sup>1</sup>

The Order of 31 October 1941 provided that Jews were entitled to the wages in force at the place of their employment, but not to wage supplements for overtime, night, Sunday or holiday work, nor to family and child allowances, maternity and death benefits, Christmas and similar bonuses, dismissal pay, etc. Whether a Jew had a wife and children to support or not, he had to pay the highest wage tax rate, namely, that for unmarried persons<sup>2</sup>, and, in addition, the same social equalisation tax as Poles.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, the many restrictions imposed upon Jews in Germany decreased the purchasing power of their net wages. They were often unable to purchase the small food rations to which they were theoretically entitled. Lastly, their earnings, like their other property, were always liable to be confiscated.

It should be pointed out that the voluminous collections of rules and regulations issued by the German authorities in the Reich and in the occupied territories contain exceedingly little upon the utilisation of Jewish labour. Jews were considered as outcasts and they were completely at the mercy of their oppressors.

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About the beginning of 1943, the systematic extermination of the ghetto populations was accelerated. Nobody was spared, not even the craftsmen who had manufactured goods for the *Luftwaffe*. At the same time, Jews were transported in increasing numbers

<sup>1</sup> In the winter of 1941-42, the Netherlands Government in exile stated that 740 of 1,200 Netherlands Jews sent to work in the salt and sulphur mines near the Mauthausen concentration camp in Upper Austria had died because they were not protected against the poisonous vapours (quoted in *Jewish Affairs*, Mar. 1942, p. 2).

<sup>2</sup> Order by the Reich Minister of Finance, of 10 March 1939 (*Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1939, Part I, p. 449). There were only two exceptions to this rule: (a) for Jews supporting legitimate children or grandchildren who, by official standards, were non-Jews (e.g., the offspring of a half-Jew who had married an "Aryan") or supporting non-Jewish foster children; (b) for Jews who had formerly supported such persons (e.g., if the non-Jewish foster child had died). For German wage tax rates, see pp. 120 *et seq.*

<sup>3</sup> Jews had to pay social equalisation tax after 1 Jan. 1941 (Order by the Reich Minister of Finance, of 24 December 1940; *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1940, Part I, p. 1666). For the social equalisation tax, see pp. 124 *et seq.*

to the concentration and extermination camps, mainly in the Government-General and western Ukraine. Ostensibly, the object of transportation to the East was often to put the Jews to work there. At the entrance of the notorious Oswiecim Camp there was a huge poster with the inscription *Arbeit Macht Frei* ("Work Makes Men Free"). Inside the camp were several factories: a war production plant (*Deutsches Aufrüstungswerk*), a factory belonging to the Krupp works, and another belonging to the Siemens concern. Other prisoners were employed in a huge *Buna* plant outside the boundaries of the camp.<sup>1</sup> Thus, to the end, exploitation was combined with extermination.

Even after the destruction of the majority of the Jews under German rule, the survivors were forced to work for the German war effort. Under a Decree issued by the Reich Government at the end of October 1944, all male Jews between the ages of 10 and 60 were called up for military labour service (*Wehrarbeitsdienst*).<sup>2</sup> But even at so late a date as the spring of 1945, in commenting on the decisions of the Yalta Conference, the Germans declared that "above all, when this war comes to an end, there will be no more Jews in Europe".<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Executive Office of the President, War Refugee Board, Washington, D.C.: mimeographed report on *German Extermination Camps*, Nov. 1944.

<sup>2</sup> *Deutsches Nachrichten Bureau*, 22 Oct. 1944.

<sup>3</sup> *Idem*, 13 Mar. 1945.



## APPENDIX III

### A SURVEY OF GERMAN RECRUITMENT METHODS IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES<sup>1</sup>

#### RECRUITMENT IN THE PROTECTORATE OF BOHEMIA-MORAVIA

In order to "achieve rigid direction of labour allocation and to mobilise even the last reserves of manpower" of the Protectorate, the following measures were taken: work books were introduced, change of employment was limited, and compulsory labour service was established. Under the control of the Reich Minister of Labour, the Protectorate's Ministry of Economic Affairs and Labour established a special "central exchange office for labour allocation" (*Zentralausgleichsstelle für Arbeitseinsatz*). This special agency was in charge of all aspects of recruitment and controlled the activities of the 19 labour offices in Bohemia and Moravia.

#### RECRUITMENT IN THE GOVERNMENT-GENERAL

Recruitment was organised by the Labour Allocation Section (*Abteilung Arbeitseinsatz*) of the Labour Department of the German administration. The section controlled the labour departments of the regional administrative offices for the regions of Cracow, Lublin, Radow, Warsaw and Lwow, to which in turn 20 labour offices with 63 branch offices were subordinated. Although the labour offices were autonomous German agencies, they formed part of the administration of the districts and had to keep the chief of the district administration (*Kreishauptmann*) informed, "especially if measures of a political nature were taken".

The actual recruitment of agricultural and industrial workers was undertaken by the labour offices. But since only a small percentage of the number needed was reached through the labour offices, the deportees had in the main to be recruited by motorised flying columns, consisting only of German recruiting agents, "from those members of families in the small peasant population who could be spared". The main emphasis was later put on the establishment of a large network of "strong points" (*Stützpunkte*) from which the recruitment was organised. These strong points

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<sup>1</sup> This appendix is based on a monograph by Dr. TIMM, *Ministerialdirigent* in the Reich Ministry of Labour, which originally appeared in the *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, and was reprinted as a separate publication in 1942. Although it occasionally refers to conditions in the early part of 1942, the survey mainly describes conditions in the summer of 1941. It must therefore be borne in mind that it deals only with an early stage of German recruitment policy. (It makes no reference to the German campaign to recruit Soviet workers, which started at that period.)

were under the command of about 100 German recruiting agents who were assisted "by a considerably larger number of Poles specially trained for the purpose. In addition, Polish workers who had already worked in Germany before were used as auxiliary recruiting agents." The recruitment was greatly facilitated by a general register of all small agricultural holdings up to 20 hectares, or approximately 8 acres (of which there were more than one million in the Government-General). The register included data on the size and crops of the holdings and on all persons living on them.

Before being sent to Germany, the labour recruits were deloused and medically examined in special reception camps established in Cracow, Warsaw, Lublin and Czenstochow.

### RECRUITMENT IN ITALY

The German labour administration established a special branch office in Rome (*Dienststelle Italien*); after the nomination of the Commissioner-General for Manpower the Rome branch office came under his direction. This German agency collaborated closely with the Italian authorities. The highest Italian authority organising the recruitment of Italians for Germany was the Commissariat for Internal Migration and Colonisation (*Commissariato per le Migrazioni e la Colonizzazione*), which was a separate department of the *Duce's* office. The Commissariat "examines the availability of all workers who are to be employed abroad, both from the standpoint of their training and their health. One of its prerogatives is to exempt certain regions of Italy from the recruitment programme. Otherwise it regulates the emigration of Italian workers in consultation with the Italian Department of Foreign Affairs." The task of the German branch office in Rome was to "assist the Italian authorities in recruitment and to arrange the transportation of workers from Italy to Germany. It has special reception camps in Milan, Como, Verona and Treviso." The German office in Rome had also to make all the administrative preparations. In particular, "it has to keep files of the labour contracts and to make excerpts from these contracts in Italian, which the worker signs when he enters into the contract and a copy of which he receives instead of a labour contract".

The four Fascist workers' confederations (of agricultural workers, of industrial workers, of commercial workers and of workers in banking and insurance) continuously received reports from the various parts of Italy upon the workers available, and decided from which provinces the required workers should be recruited. The actual recruiting was, with the exception of metal workers, undertaken by the provincial unions of these confederations, "in the closest collaboration with the political and Government authorities of the province, which exercise considerable influence in matters of labour conscription".

For the recruitment of metal workers special commissions were formed, "consisting of one German metal expert as chairman, one representative of the German metal industry, and when necessary, an interpreter. The activities of these commissions extend to all available workers, even if they are still employed." The provincial

unions presented Italian metal workers to this German commission, which examined them and sent special lists of recruited metal workers daily to the German agency in Rome. On the basis of these lists, the agency in Rome organised special workers' trains and notified the Fascist Confederation of Industrial Workers of the decisions taken by forwarding to it a list of names. The German agency in Rome also notified all authorities concerned in the Reich, as well as the Italian and Swiss railway administrations, of the composition of the transports.

The actual recruiting of agricultural workers was entirely in the hands of the Fascist Confederation of Agricultural Workers.

The German reception camps kept a special register of those workers whose re-entry into Reich territory was undesirable and who were therefore excluded from the transports.

### RECRUITMENT IN SLOVAKIA

After the formation of the State of Slovakia in March 1939, the recruitment of workers remained, as it had been since the end of 1938, in the hands of the branch office of the Reich Ministry of Labour for Austria, but early in 1941 a special branch office of the Reich Ministry of Labour was established for Slovakia, with its seat in Bratislava. It worked in close collaboration with the Slovak authorities for the employment in Germany of "the prescribed number of Slovak workers".

On the Slovak side the Central Labour Office, organised under the Slovak Ministry of the Interior, supervised 60 labour offices. "During the recruiting season German recruitment agents are assigned to the Slovak labour offices, which, in collaboration with them, carry out the recruitment."

"The partly unfavourable communication system of the rural regions of Slovakia are detrimental to recruitment. In the absence of sufficient transportation, workers from these districts have to march long distances on foot. This is a complication. . . particularly since the time for the recruitment drives can, as a rule, only be announced by drummers and posters on Sundays when the people go to church."

### RECRUITMENT IN HUNGARY

#### *Agricultural Workers*

The Hungarian authorities notified the Reich Ministry of Labour of the number of available agricultural workers. The Ministry assigned these workers among the German regional labour offices, which in turn sent the employment applications through the regional labour office of Lower Austria to the German branch office (*Dienststelle*) in Budapest. The German agency in Budapest distributed the applications among the various Hungarian recruitment areas. After the Hungarian Council of Ministers had determined the contingents to be furnished by the various areas, the provincial (*Kömitat*) agencies informed the various villages as to the number of recruits they had to furnish. The quotas of the poorer villages had preferably to be greater than those of other villages.

A few days before a particular recruitment drive began, the Hungarian Minister of Agriculture notified the provincial administration, which made preparatory arrangements together with the representatives of the Reich Ministry of Labour, who had travelled to the spot. A representative of the Hungarian agricultural inspection service also had to be present.

The actual recruitment procedure was described as follows. "The unemployed (selected by the communities according to their degree of need) are assembled in the town hall. The German recruiting agent selects those who appear suitable and, after they have been found fit by the doctor, receives their undertaking to abide by the labour contracts which he has before him. These contracts give the day and hour of the departure of the transport, and the reception camp (from which the transport is to start) at which the recruits have to appear."

### *Industrial Workers*

Appeals to industrial workers to go to Germany were made to the unemployed by the Hungarian employment offices. Applicants, after a medical examination, were interviewed by the German recruitment agents with the collaboration of representatives of German industry. The register of the Hungarian employment office concerned was used. On the day of the departure of the train, the workers received their passports, a banking certificate to be used for the transfer of wage savings from Germany to Hungary and a handbook in Hungarian, which, in addition to other information, contained the full text of the model working contract. The original working contracts were left with the leaders of the respective groups and each worker was informed that he was free to copy from that contract details, such as wage scales, into his own handbook. Every handbook also showed the name and place of the German firm for which the Hungarian was hired.

### RECRUITMENT IN BULGARIA

"The organisation and the structure of the branch of the German labour administration in Bulgaria (*Dienststelle Bulgarien*) were to an extraordinary extent influenced by the political events in the Balkans. In general, recruitment was carried out on the basis of a treaty between the Royal Bulgarian and the Reich Governments."

The German *Dienststelle* collaborated with two Bulgarian organisations, namely: (a) the Labour Department and the labour inspectorates of the Bulgarian Ministry of Commerce, and (b) the Association of Workers' Syndicates, the official Bulgarian trade union organisation. The latter was responsible for preparing lists of Bulgarians willing to go to Germany, for examining their qualifications and for forwarding this information to the German *Dienststelle*. The registration data for recruitment were tentatively fixed by the German agency; the Bulgarian Labour Department was then notified and, if it did not object, the registration days were communicated to the labour inspectorates, the administrative

agencies of the respective regions (*Okolisko Upravitel*), which in turn informed the mayors, and the local trade union organisations. The population was notified by drummers. At the same time employment conditions such as wages, duration of contract, housing and feeding, were made public.

The recruitment commission was composed of the German recruitment agents, a representative of the Reich Labour Department or labour inspectorate, and a Bulgarian public health doctor; and sometimes also of a representative of the German employing firm, a representative of the Bulgarian trade union organisation, and, if workers for German mines were recruited, of a German physician.

For every recruited worker an individual contract was made out in four copies, for the worker, the German employer, the Bulgarian Labour Department, and the recruitment agency respectively. To be valid, every contract had to be countersigned by the Bulgarian labour inspector. On the basis of the contract the recruited worker had to apply to the provincial authority for a passport, and the German recruitment agent had to apply to the police headquarters in Sofia for an exit visa. Bulgarian workers travelled in mass transports on the Danube. The expenses of the journey to the port of departure had to be borne by the recruits, but were, if neediness was proved, refunded by the German unemployment insurance fund. Recruitment in Bulgaria "suffered extraordinarily from the political and military events in the winter and spring of 1941". Bulgarian mobilisation restricted the available manpower, and transportation on the Danube proved very cumbersome, since it came to a standstill during the winter months.

#### RECRUITMENT IN SERBIA

In the German-occupied part of Serbia, supervision of recruitment was in the hands of a commission (*Stab des Generalbevollmächtigten für die Wirtschaft in Serbien*) which, while belonging to the German military administration, received its instructions from Reich Marshal Hermann Göring, as Commissioner for the Four-Year Plan. After 1 July 1941, special recruitment agents were employed. Since the "largest part of the population of the rump State of Serbia are small and medium peasants who cling to their soil and never furnished migratory workers, the rural districts had to be discarded and recruitment could only be carried out in the cities and larger villages". But "appeals to the unemployed population to seek work in Germany had[only] varying degrees of success. In the Banat interest was greater." In view of this failure, the German authorities decided to introduce in the occupied Serb territories the principles of German labour conscription. As far as possible, conscripted workers were employed in Serbia proper for the German war effort, and thus, for example, Serb miners could not be recruited for Germany.

For other categories of workers, energetic propaganda was maintained by posters and leaflets which compared the conditions in Serbia with those in Germany. Serb newspapers reported daily on the possibilities of finding work in Germany, the head of the

recruitment department of the German occupation authority and the Serb central employment office made frequent radio appeals, etc.

#### RECRUITMENT IN THE NETHERLANDS

After the German occupation of the Netherlands, the Secretary-General of the Netherlands Ministry of Social Affairs, by an Order of 24 September 1940, created a new system of public employment offices. Thirty-seven district employment offices with 144 branch offices were placed under the supervision of a central employment office, which was a section of the Ministry of Social Affairs.

"The recruitment of Netherlands workers is hampered by the mentality of the population. Netherlands workers are people who are firmly attached to their land and—as experience before the war had already taught—would seek work elsewhere only in a situation of extreme emergency."

"The health of many Netherlandsers is not good, especially that of women. Dental and intestinal sicknesses are particularly frequent. The Netherlands employment offices have therefore, under German supervision, carried out systematic group examinations by German and Netherlands doctors. The result of the examinations shows that the percentage of persons of impaired working capacity is considerably higher in the big cities than in the small cities and rural areas."

#### RECRUITMENT IN BELGIUM AND NORTHERN FRANCE

When the Germans occupied Belgium "almost the entire personnel of the Belgian employment offices and of the central employment office had fled. The buildings of these offices were partly destroyed, damaged or devastated. The Director-General of the central employment office ordered the destruction of the files, registers and indexes, but parts of them were found among the refuse and dung heaps and put back into working condition. . . The German military administration, with the help of German labour administration experts, started work immediately and soon secured the necessary technical equipment and staff for the rehabilitation and extension of the work of the employment offices. In the meantime they have become useful for the direction of Belgian labour."

At first, 120 experienced German recruitment agents were assigned to the various German military authorities in Belgium and recruitment of Belgians was exclusively in their hands. In due course, after one or several Germans had been assigned to every Belgian employment office, those offices were also used.

In northern France, the two Departments (*Nord* and *Pas de Calais*) were also found in complete disorganisation. For the planned use of manpower the German authorities established, until November 1940, 16 district labour offices which had to recruit workers for Germany. In these regions, recruitment was exclusively in the hands of German officials. Both in Belgium and northern France, for the recruitment of metal workers and railway workers, engineers from German aircraft factories and from

the German railways were assigned to the recruitment commissions, as were technical advisers for the textile and chemical industries. "The recruitment [of all types of workers] at first met with certain difficulties which were, however, overcome within a comparatively short period. Once a large number of workers from Belgium and northern France had gone to Germany and had told their families and friends in letters and on their vacation visits the real state of affairs in Germany, propaganda against work in Germany was doomed to failure."

### RECRUITMENT IN THE REST OF FRANCE

The Reich Ministry of Labour assigned the task of recruiting French workers to the branch offices of the German Military Commander in France. The military authorities were assisted by officials of the German civilian labour administration, who worked as recruiting agents. After February 1941, the district and local German military commanders were also included in the recruitment machinery. "Periodically, special recruitment columns are sent to those districts where workers of a special type, for example, foundry workers and dock workers, can be recruited or where unsatisfactory results have to be improved."

"The assistance given to the German organisation by the French labour administration in general was confined to putting their statistical information at the disposal [of the Germans]; for the French employment offices can only be used for collaborating in the planned distribution of workers within France, because their staffs are small and an extension of their functions is hampered by geographical and personnel difficulties."

Recruitment drives were supported by extensive propaganda through posters, leaflets, pamphlets, newspaper articles, broadcasts and films. In addition, "appropriate French workers who have already been in the Reich are used for recruitment within the plants".

For every recruited worker, a transfer certificate (*Überweisungsschein*) was made out containing excerpts from the working conditions which applied. One copy of this certificate was handed to the recruit, one sent to the German employer, one to the German labour office in France which had recruited him, one to his home sickness insurance fund, and one (obviously for purposes of further control) to an undisclosed authority. After medical examination, the workers were transported in special trains which left three times a week from Paris and twice a month from Dijon.

"As the foregoing shows, the French worker at first responded only reluctantly to German recruitment. It is difficult for him to forget anti-German propaganda which began even in the school room, and in the last few years reached unheard-of dimensions, and it is a difficult decision for him to leave his family and the milieu to which he is accustomed. . . unless compelled by the most extreme want, he prefers to continue starving instead of getting a higher income through a step which, to his mind, is quite out of the ordinary."

"The French employer is anxious to keep the workers in the country and therefore uses all his economic and moral influence. He is afraid that once Frenchmen return from the Reich they will make demands concerning humane treatment, the equipment of the plants and social care, which would create complicated problems. His desire [to keep French workers in France] is furthered by the extensive subcontracting of German production to France, which not only permits French economy to maintain its manpower but also secures them German help in procuring raw materials."

"At the end of March 1941, the French Ministry of Labour announced its consent to the German recruitment drives and ordered its agencies to observe a loyal attitude towards these activities."

### RECRUITMENT IN DENMARK

Recruitment was carried out "in complete independence of the Danish employment offices" (*Arbejdsanvisningskontorer*) and was exclusively in the hands of the German recruitment organisation. On 24 May 1940, the German Embassy in Copenhagen announced in the Danish press the opening of the "German Employment Office in Denmark", which at first was active only in the capital. Later, branch offices were established in Apenrade for northern Slesvick, in Aarhus for central Jutland, in Odense for the Island of Funen and in Aalborg for northern Jutland. In addition, two flying recruitment agencies visited other regions from time to time.

"All Danes, before being sent to Germany, are as far as possible examined with regard to their political reliability and criminal record. Investigations are also made to discover whether they have been in Germany before and for what reasons they left. Workers who have previously broken their contracts in Germany without sufficient reason are excluded. This scheme, which is carried out with the assistance of the Danish police, has proved successful."

Transportation was at first by steamer from Travemünde; later, in order to save expenses, by rail. "For various reasons a reception camp had to be established in Flensburg." Although 436 transports were organised altogether up to 31 August 1941, "recruitment in Denmark met, especially in the first months [after the German occupation], with considerable difficulties. In particular, certain differences in the conditions of life between the two countries proved to be an obstacle. Moreover, propaganda in the Danish press, which is periodically repeated and promises great work projects [in Denmark] makes many Danish workers hesitate to accept employment offers from Germany."

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## APPENDIX IV

### AN ESTIMATE OF FOREIGN LABOUR EMPLOYED IN "GREATER GERMANY" IN JANUARY 1944<sup>1</sup>

1. From Czechoslovakia:	
(a) "Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia":	
civilian workers.....	230,000
(b) Slovakia: civilian workers.....	118,000
2. From Poland: civilian workers.....	1,400,000 <sup>2</sup>
employed prisoners of war.....	56,000 <sup>3</sup>
3. From Norway: civilian workers.....	2,000
4. From Denmark: civilian workers.....	23,000
5. From the Netherlands: civilian workers.....	350,000
6. From Belgium: civilian workers.....	500,000
employed prisoners of war.....	30,000
7. From France (except Alsace-Lorraine): civilian	
workers.....	1,100,000 <sup>4</sup>
employed prisoners of war.....	870,000 <sup>5</sup>
8. From Yugoslavia:	
(a) except Croatia: civilian workers.....	70,000
employed prisoners of war.....	95,000
(b) from Croatia: civilian workers.....	200,000
9. From Greece: civilian workers.....	20,000
10. From the U.S.S.R.:	
(a) except the three Baltic Republics:	
civilian workers.....	2,000,000
employed prisoners of war.....	1,000,000
(b) from Lithuania: civilian workers.....	90,000
(c) from Latvia: civilian workers.....	60,000
(d) from Estonia: civilian workers.....	15,000
11. From Italy: civilian workers.....	180,000
employed prisoners of war.....	170,000
12. From Hungary: civilian workers.....	25,000
13. From Bulgaria: civilian workers.....	35,000

<sup>1</sup> See "The Mobilisation of Foreign Labour by Germany", in *International Labour Review*, Vol. L, No. 4, Oct. 1944, p. 470 (based on information communicated to the I.L.O. by Dr. Eugene M. Kulischer, with the co-operation of Dr. J. B. Schechtmann), where an explanation of the figures is given.

<sup>2</sup> Excluding Ukrainian workers from eastern Galicia, but including workers from the Government-General and the incorporated Polish provinces, as well as Polish prisoners of war working under the status of "free workers".

<sup>3</sup> Total number of prisoners, including those not actually employed.

<sup>4</sup> Including 250,000 prisoners of war converted into "free workers".

<sup>5</sup> Excluding 250,000 prisoners of war converted into "free workers".

14. From Rumania: civilian workers . . . . .	6,000
15. From Spain: civilian workers . . . . .	8,000
16. From Switzerland: civilian workers . . . . .	18,000

Total estimate of foreigners working in "Greater Germany" in January 1944:

civilian workers . . . . .	6,450,000
employed prisoners of war . . . . .	2,221,000
Total . . . . .	8,671,000

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In estimating the displacement of population caused by Germany's mass recruitment of foreigners and its impact upon the countries concerned both during and after the war, an important aspect is the occupational background of the labour recruits. Information on this subject has been very scarce. However, for Netherlands working in Germany, Belgium and France, statistical data are available. The following table, compiled by Nether-

OCCUPATIONAL BACKGROUND OF GERMAN-EMPLOYED  
NETHERLANDERS

Occupational group	Allocated for work			
	between 20 June 1940 and 31 Dec. 1943 in Germany			between 28 Dec. 1940 and 31 Dec. 1943 in Belgium and France
	frontier workers	others	total	
Ceramic industries, including brickmakers . . . . .	3,996	2,815	6,811	9
Building industry . . . . .	19,835	73,831	93,666	34,555
Wood . . . . .	1,313	7,358	8,671	23
Clothing . . . . .	1,831	5,105	6,936	13
Leather . . . . .	1,839	3,816	5,655	11
Coal, peat, etc. . . . .	6,750	2,693	9,443	1
Metal industry . . . . .	6,669	80,189	86,858	939
Textile industry . . . . .	20,339	5,560	25,899	11
Food, drink, and similar in- dustries . . . . .	3,598	18,648	22,246	73
Agricultural undertakings . . .	11,077	29,663	40,740	47
Commerce . . . . .	450	7,849	8,299	61
Transportation . . . . .	2,842	49,127	51,969	588
Public services and other "white collar" workers . . . .	1,048	24,740	25,788	80
Domestic workers . . . . .	2,135	12,122	14,257	4
Unskilled factory workers and journeymen . . . . .	15,382	78,114	93,496	1,931
Other occupations, except fac- tory workers and journeymen .	348	1,329	1,677	3
Unspecified occupations . . . .	738	8,729	9,467	31
Total . . . . .	100,190	411,688	511,878	38,380

lands authorities during the German occupation, indicates the occupational distribution in their own country of 550,258 Netherlanders (511,878 working in Germany, and 38,380 working in German-occupied Belgium and France) who were recruited up to 31 December 1943. Of the 511,878 working in Germany, 130,159 had, according to the same statistics, for various reasons returned to the Netherlands by 31 December 1943.<sup>1</sup>

On the basis of these official statistics showing that, during the period under consideration, 130,159 Netherlanders had returned from Germany, the number of Netherlanders still employed there at the end of 1943 (511,878, minus 130,159) would, therefore, have amounted to approximately 382,000<sup>2</sup>, the great majority of whom were skilled workers.

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After January 1944, the German recruitment drives and various other measures to increase manpower supply continued unabated.

According to the clandestine radio transmitter "Free Lithuania", on 20 February 1944, the German occupation authorities arranged for the transfer of 100,000 more Lithuanian labourers to the Reich at the rate of 5,000 per week, beginning on 5 March 1944.

Similarly, at the end of January 1944, further train loads of Estonian boys and girls were reported as being sent to Germany.<sup>3</sup>

The Turin *Stampa* of 26 July 1944 reported that, during a visit to Hitler's headquarters, Mussolini made arrangements for 710,000 Italian soldiers who, following Badoglio's armistice with the Allies, had been put to work in Germany as prisoners of war, to continue working there as "free workers". The paper added that these Italians would work better as "free workers" and that in any case it would have been impossible to demand their return to German-dominated Italy, since "there was no certainty at all that, after their return, the men would not sooner or later take the path leading to the Maquis and swell the ranks of the rebels".

The number of Hungarians deported to the Reich increased greatly after the German occupation of Hungary in the spring of 1944.<sup>4</sup>

On 17 February 1945, the Paris newspaper *Le Monde* published the following estimate of the number of French men and women still held by Germany:

Prisoners of war.....	750,000
Prisoners of war whose status had been changed into "free workers".....	220,000
Recruited civilian workers.....	708,000

<sup>1</sup> *Maandschrift van het Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek*, 1943, No.11-12, p. 284.

<sup>2</sup> This figure differs slightly from that given in the table on p. 265 which is an estimate based on this and other sources.

<sup>3</sup> *Aftonidningen* (Stockholm), 27 Jan. 1944; *Arbetaren*, 1 Feb. 1944.

<sup>4</sup> The first programme of the German occupation authorities called for the conscription of 150,000 Hungarian workers for Germany (*La Suisse*, Geneva, 29 Mar. 1944).

Political deportees.....	400,000
Racial deportees.....	115,000
Persons from Alsace-Lorraine <sup>1</sup> .....	300,000
Total.....	2,493,000

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It must again be emphasised that the estimates of the number of foreigners working within "Greater Germany" are far from representing the sum total of foreigners employed by the Third Reich, because so many of them had to work outside the frontiers of "Greater Germany".

In general, it may be assumed that the number of foreigners inside the Reich increased considerably after January 1944, since the Germans continued their practice of taking foreign workers with them when they had to give up occupied territory. For example, after the great German retreat from the Soviet Union began in 1942, transportation of Soviet citizens to the rear was carried out on a huge scale. These evacuated persons were not always brought at once into the Reich proper; large numbers of them were put to work east of the Reich frontier in the territories still under German occupation. Continued German defeats in the East only served to stimulate the policy of mass displacement.<sup>2</sup>

Similarly, in the liberated regions of western and south-eastern Europe, the Allied armies found only small contingents of German-employed foreign workers, such as members of the Todt Organisation, who had been left behind by the retreating Germans. It appears that the bulk of the foreigners whom the Germans had employed abroad were removed either to the Reich or to territories which the Germans still held. Until the latest stages of the war the Germans still controlled wide areas outside the Reich and were thus able to continue the employment of foreign labour outside the Reich on a large scale. The proportion of those moved into the Reich increased as the territories held by the Germans diminished.

<sup>1</sup> The first group of French civilians employed in the Reich came from Alsace-Lorraine; official German reports gave their number as 24,500 for July to November 1940. After the incorporation of these territories in the Reich, German sources ceased to include persons deported from there in statistics of foreign workers employed in Germany.

<sup>2</sup> A German officer who had been on the Eastern Front wrote in the *Berliner Börsen-Zeitung* (quoted by *Stockholms-Tidningen*, 20 Oct. 1943): "To evacuate a district is easier said than done . . . the majority of the population must be taken along".

## APPENDIX V

### MODEL LABOUR CONTRACTS

#### MODEL CONTRACT FOR ITALIAN INDUSTRIAL WORKERS

*(Supplement to the German-Italian State Treaty of 17 March 1939,  
concerning the Employment of Italians in Germany)*

The most important clauses of the model contract read as follows:

The duration of the employment is limited. The labour contract comes into force on the day after the worker arrives at the place of employment and remains in force for . . . months (if possible 12, and at least 6 months).

By agreement between the employer and the worker, this contract can be renewed for a specific period of time. Such agreement must be put in writing. But if the employment is renewed either by oral agreement or tacitly, beyond the time agreed upon in written form, such renewal shall be for a period of 3 months at a time. Until further changes, the total duration of the employment, as laid down in an agreement between the German and Italian authorities, must, however, not exceed 15 months.

The German employer has the right to dismiss the worker, after giving due previous notice, before the termination of the contract, in the following cases:

- (a) within the first month after the beginning of the employment if the worker is unfit for the work;
- (b) if it appears necessary to transfer the worker to another employment, where the worker would work under parallel conditions.

"As minimum conditions", the collective rules (*Tarifordnungen*) decreed by the German authorities or, in their absence, the usual local wage and working conditions were to apply. As a general rule, the German-employed Italian "shall receive the same wage as a comparable German worker".

"If the employer so desires, the workers must do piece work or premium work." For piece work, a wage increase, expressed as a percentage of the hourly rates and based on the output which was normal at the undertaking in question, was to be guaranteed.

Concerning "working time and the method of its computation", the model contract merely stated that these questions "shall be determined by the regulations which are in force at any given time". The individual labour contract was, however, to contain indications of the daily and weekly working hours and to guarantee a minimum number of working hours. Overtime, as well as night, Sunday and holiday work had to be done within the framework of existing regulations except on 29 June (St. Peter's and St. Paul's

Day) and 8 December (Feast of the Conception). Pay increases for this work had to be the same as for comparable German workers. Six days in the year which were not legal holidays in Germany, were to be considered as such for Italians: the Epiphany; Corpus Christi; the Ascension of the Virgin; All Souls' Day; the anniversary of the Foundation of Rome (21 April); and the anniversary of the March on Rome (28 October).

The model provisions also stipulated that the individual contract was to indicate the manner of wage payments. It had to specify whether or not the worker was to receive board and lodging; and, if so, at what prices.

Travelling expenses from the worker's home to the frontier had to be borne by the worker, and thence onwards by the employer, who also paid the fees for the employment permit, the labour permit and the residence permit.

Married workers were entitled to family furlough after continuous employment in Germany for at least six months (unmarried workers, after one year); the furlough was to be granted within the next six months (unmarried workers, within the next year). But if the worker so desired, or if it was urgently required by the public interest, two successive half-yearly furloughs were to be combined into one. The date of the home furlough was to be determined by the employer with due consideration for the transport situation and the needs of the undertaking, in agreement with the labour office, the German Labour Front, and the Fascist Federation of Italian Workers.

Home furlough was to last seven days, exclusive of travelling time. Travelling expenses to and from the frontier were to be borne by the employer. Otherwise, the German general regulations concerning home furloughs (21 October 1940) had to be applied.

It was permissible to transfer the worker to another working place provided that the conditions of the contract applied there too.

If the worker had duly terminated his contract, the employer had to pay his travelling expenses to the frontier, including a fair amount for food.

#### MODEL CONTRACT FOR AGRICULTURAL WORKERS FROM ITALY (PERMANENT WORKERS)<sup>1</sup>

The following are the main provisions of a model contract for Italian agricultural workers who were permanently employed on German farms (not on large estates):

Every worker was obliged to sign an individual labour contract which had to conform to the conditions laid down in the model. The contract had to contain the name of the German employer, who also had to sign. Married women needed the consent of their husbands, minor workers the consent of their parents or guardian.

<sup>1</sup> The date of the German-Italian agreements containing model contracts for Italian agricultural workers was not divulged; it appears that they were negotiated early in 1941. (Agreement Va 5770-2.41-C 0996, *Italiener 5a*; *Ausländische Arbeiter*. pp. 606, 615 *et seq.*)

By the act of signature the worker bound himself not to leave his place of employment until a certain date. He declared himself to be in good health and without physical impediments which would incapacitate him for work, and to be familiar with all usual field and stable work. Women had also to declare that they were not pregnant.

The monthly wage for May to September was fixed for men at 55 RM and for women at 45 RM, and from October to April at 53 RM and 43 RM respectively. "These rates also cover work done in excess of the usual working time as well as work performed on Sundays and holidays. Workers are entitled to aggregate rest periods of at least 2 hours a day."

Apart from these specific regulations, the model contract merely contained a provision that "working time, payment, etc., shall be determined by the collective rules (*Tarifordnungen*) which are in force at the place of work". In addition to wages, workers were entitled to free board, heating and light. "Accommodation must conform to hygienic standards."

"As far as labour protection, public social services, social insurance and the regulation of working conditions, including labour disputes, are concerned, the Italian worker enjoys, as a matter of principle, the same protection as the German worker, unless German legislation provides differently for foreigners in general."

"Travelling expenses from the worker's home to his place of work as well as the cost of the employment permit, labour permit and residence permit are paid by the employer. After the worker has duly fulfilled his obligations he is to receive a free ticket from his place of employment to the same frontier station at which he had entered Germany (Brennero)."

"Delegates of the German Ministry of Labour, the district labour offices and the labour offices have at all times right of access to the working and living places of workers." They must try to straighten out difficulties arising between employers and the Italians. "Wherever possible, complaints should be settled in an informal way on the spot. If litigation results from the labour contract, the case shall come under the jurisdiction of the local German courts of law."

#### MODEL CONTRACT FOR AGRICULTURAL WORKERS FROM ITALY (SEASONAL WORKERS)

The model labour contract for Italian seasonal agricultural workers varied from that for permanent agricultural workers in several respects, and was much more detailed. The main provisions, as far as they differed from those just mentioned, were as follows:

No specific wage was promised; instead, it was stated that migratory Italian workers would receive the same wages as their German fellow workers. Piece-work rates, in the absence of official regulations, were to be so fixed as to assure, for average output, a wage at least 30 per cent. higher than the hourly rates. As much use as possible was to be made of piece rates. Foreigners were

entitled to a threshing bonus if such a bonus was given to German workers. If they were asked to do non-agricultural work, they were to receive extra payment.

The employment ended on completion of the harvest work, but not before 1 November or 15 December.

If weather or other conditions did not allow work in the fields the labourers had to do "substitute" work (*Füllarbeit*). If no "substitute" work was available, they had within the next 30 days to work up to two hours a day without pay, until the number of additional hours equalled the number of hours they had been idle. Whatever portion of the idle time was not made up within 30 days, was to be cancelled without loss of pay.

Unless the general regulations were more favourable, Italians were entitled to two hours' rest for breakfast, lunch, and afternoon meal. The time spent in reaching the fields, and in returning from the fields, was considered as working time. In emergencies, the workers had to work overtime, to be remunerated according to German regulations.

During the first six weeks a "deposit" of 3 RM weekly, and during the following 9 weeks a deposit of 2 RM weekly, was to be deducted from the wage. These amounts became due only at the time of the worker's departure on the completion of his obligations. Deductions were also to be made for taxes, sickness insurance and accident insurance. Further deductions were foreseen for absence from work without good reason or without permission. In the latter case, the employer was also expressly entitled to make a proportionate reduction in the amount of food supplied.

Seasonal agricultural workers from Italy were entitled to receive a wage account at every payment. Complaints concerning alleged discrepancies between the account and the amount paid could be considered only if made immediately, and complaints concerning the computation of the number of hours or the piece rates had to be made within 14 days.

The regular weekly food supply was to consist of:

- 6 kg potatoes
- 7 quarts skimmed milk (1 quart daily)
- 4½ kg bread
- 1 kg wheat flour
- ¼ kg fat (150 grams butter and 100 grams lard or bacon)
- ½ kg meat
- ¼ kg sugar
- ¼ kg salt

But whenever German regulations forbade the supply of any of these foodstuffs, equivalent substitutes were to be given, but always in kind, never in money. The workers were to receive "decent collective accommodation", containing tables, chairs, washing facilities, a wardrobe provided with a lock, a common stove for cooking and washing, cooking, eating and washing utensils, good water for drinking and cooking purposes, sufficient fuel and, for each worker, one bedstead with straw sack, one pillow,



two sheets and two woollen blankets. Men and women might not be accommodated in the same buildings.

The food was to be cooked by women appointed by the employer in consultation with the Italian gang leaders (one cook to every 15 workers). The cook also had to clean the quarters and peel the potatoes. She was entitled to the wage of other Italian female workers.

Both the employer and the worker had the right to terminate the labour contract without notice for serious reasons. It was expressly stated that "trade union activity" must not be considered as a serious reason entitling the employer to dismiss an Italian worker. This applied, of course, only to the official Fascist confederations and corporations.

If the worker fell sick he was entitled to the services of the sickness insurance fund. Whenever he was incapable of work on account of sickness or for other reason, he was not entitled to wages or food, but had to rely on sickness pay from the sickness insurance fund.

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Government agreements concerning Italian agricultural workers (permanent and seasonal) in Germany included the following additional rules<sup>1</sup>:

Any stoppage of work is prohibited both by German and Italian legislation and therefore punishable. Even while disputes are under examination it is most severely prohibited.

The employer shall have the bedding of migratory workers washed every four weeks . . . Arrangements have been made to supply Italian agricultural workers with soap or other cleaning material . . . Italian seasonal workers are as far as possible given land on which they can grow their own kitchen herbs.

Supervision and care of Italian workers is, on the German side, entrusted to the labour offices and the agencies of the Reich agricultural organisation (*Reichsnährstand*). On the Italian side, supervision and care of Italian agricultural workers in Germany is in the hands of the diplomatic and consular representatives and of the delegates of the Fascist Association of Agricultural Workers (*C.F.L.A.*).

#### MODEL CONTRACT FOR AGRICULTURAL WORKERS FROM BALKAN COUNTRIES

The model contracts for Croat, Slovak and Hungarian permanent and seasonal agricultural workers (all dating from 1941)<sup>2</sup> followed the pattern of the Italian agreements. The food arrangements were, however, different. Croat, Slovak and Hungarians were to receive the same food as their fellow German workers.<sup>3</sup> The weekly standard supply was given as:

7½ kg potatoes (for Slovaks, 12½ kg)

7 quarts of skimmed milk or 3½ quarts full milk

<sup>1</sup> Agreement Va 5770-1.41-C 0996 *Italiener 5* (*ibid.*, pp. 625 *et seq.*).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 607-608.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 632-633, 643, 653.

- $4\frac{1}{2}$  kg bread
- 1 kg of peeled barley, or cream of wheat, or groats or legumes (*Hülsenfrüchte*)
- $\frac{1}{2}$  kg corn flour or  $\frac{3}{8}$  kg wheat flour
- $\frac{1}{4}$  kg fat
- $\frac{1}{4}$  kg salt

Meat, butter, bacon and sugar, which were mentioned in the Italian agreement, were left out. It was also provided that "if at any given period, owing to [German] regulations, these rations cannot be furnished, the workers are to receive cash instead". In other cases, the employer was entitled, "if the worker consented", to substitute a sum of money (computed on the basis of official ceiling prices for producers or, failing these, the market prices) except for potatoes, milk and bread, which, under the model contracts, had always to be furnished in kind. The workers were to be supplied with a bedstead, straw sack, one pillow and one woollen blanket, but no sheets.

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## APPENDIX VI

### FOOD RATIONS

#### A. IN THE GOVERNMENT-GENERAL

In the Government-General, the following food rations for non-German workers came into effect on 1 October 1943<sup>1</sup>:

##### *Monthly Food Rations for Non-German Workers (over 14 Years of Age)*

Bread. ....	9,000 grams
or flour (in the ratio of 750 grams of flour to 1,000 grams of bread) up to.....	3,375 "
<i>Nährmittel</i> <sup>2</sup> .....	200 "
Coffee substitute.....	125 "
Sugar.....	300 "
Jam.....	500 "
Meat up to.....	400 "
Potatoes (100 kg per year).....	8,330 "

"Privileged consumers" (*Bevorzugte Versorgungsberechtigte*), namely, (a) persons employed (*Bedienstete*) in offices and institutions functioning under public law, and (b) wage earners and salaried employees of enterprises entrusted with special tasks in the German interest, whose efficiency and trustworthiness deserved special reward, were entitled monthly to:

Additional meat ration.....	500 grams
Additional fat ration.....	200 "
Additional potato ration (per year).....	200 kg

If these "privileged consumers" were fed in canteens, so-called "canteen additions" (*Betriebsküchenzulagen*) were granted, consisting of 250 grams of *Nährmittel*, 250 grams of flour, and 125 grams of sugar per head per month.

On application by the managements of undertakings to the local labour offices, additional rations could be granted to workers whose "regular daily work requires continuous physical exertion in excess of the effort demanded from ordinary workers" (*Zusatz-versorgungsberechtigte*):

<sup>1</sup> Decree of 22 September 1943, issued by Naumann, head of the Department of Food and Agriculture in the Government-General, published in the local German-language press on 26 Sept. 1943.

<sup>2</sup> The Decree did not specify the items of which the *Nährmittel* should consist.

*Additional Rations per Month*

	for heavy work —	for very heavy work —
Bread (or an equivalent amount of flour)	2,400 grams	5,600 grams
<i>Nährmittel</i> .....	250 "	250 "
Coffee substitute.....	125 "	125 "
Jam.....	250 "	250 "
Sugar.....	125 "	250 "
Meat.....	800 "	1,200 "
Fat.....	600 "	900 "
Potatoes (per year).....	200 kg	200 kg

The supplementary ration for heavy work was, as a matter of general policy, made to depend on individual output. In December 1943, for instance, Struve, Commissioner for Manpower in the Government-General, introduced three types of food rations for non-German workers: class A for those whose output was below the average; class B for those whose output was comparable to Reich standards; and class C for output above the average. Only persons engaged in "heavy" or "extra-heavy" work and classified in categories B or C were granted additional food.

## B. IN GERMAN CONCENTRATION CAMPS AND POLICE PRISONS

It may be of interest, for purposes of comparison, to give the official food rations in German concentration camps and police prisons in force in the spring of 1941<sup>1</sup>:

*Normal Rations for Prisoners per Person per Week  
(grams)*

Meat or meat products.....	320 ("if meat from uninspected slaughterhouse ( <i>Freifleischbank</i> ), increase up to 50 per cent. permissible")
Fats.....	200 (of which 150 margarine or 120 oil, and 50 pork fat ( <i>Schweineschlachtfett</i> ) or 40 pork lard ( <i>Schweineschmalz</i> ))
Curds ( <i>Quark</i> ).....	100 (or 50 cheese made from skimmed milk ( <i>Magerkäse</i> ))
Bread.....	2,740
Sugar.....	80 (plus 40 if no jam is issued)
<i>Nährmittel</i> (groats, cream of wheat, cream of maize, grain oats, potato flour, pastes, sago, etc.).....	150
Flour or flour mixture ( <i>Mehle oder Mehlgemische</i> ).....	225
Coffee substitute or coffee supplements ( <i>Kaffee-Ersatz oder Kaffe Zusatzmittel</i> ).....	84

<sup>1</sup> Decrees by the Reich Ministry of Food and Agriculture, of 16 January 1940, 5 April 1940, and 30 May 1941 (*Kommentar zur Reichsverteidigungsgesetzgebung*, Vol. V, pp. 241 *et seq.*). The potato ration is not mentioned.

Additions (in grams) for certain categories of inmates of concentration camps and police prisons were as follows:

- (a) additional rations for "heavy" work (*Schwerarbeiter*) per day: meat and meat products ("if meat from uninspected slaughterhouse, increase up to 50 per cent. permissible") . . . up to 320; fat . . . up to 100—of which up to 75 margarine or up to 60 oil, and up to 25 pork fat (*Schweineschlachtfett*) or up to 20 pork lard (*Schweineschmalz*);
  - (b) additional rations for prisoners working during long night shifts (*lange Nachtarbeiter*) per week: meat and meat products . . . 160; margarine . . . 20; bread . . . 600;
  - (c) additional rations for prisoners performing agricultural work, per week: meat and meat products . . . 160; margarine . . . 20; bread . . . 600.
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## APPENDIX VII

### SOCIAL INSURANCE PROVISIONS

#### GERMAN-EMPLOYED ITALIANS

On 20 June 1939, Germany and Italy concluded a treaty concerning social insurance questions which, however, was not ratified until Italy had entered the war, namely, on 2 August 1940. It came into effect on 1 September 1940<sup>1</sup>, and was amended by an agreement between the Reich Minister of Labour and the Italian Minister of Corporations of 31 March 1941.<sup>2</sup> The chief provisions of this treaty were as follows: Italian workers moving to Germany with transplanted Italian undertakings remained insured under the Italian social insurance system if their stay in Germany did not exceed six months. Otherwise, they were insured in the country in which they were employed, and were to be treated in the same way as the nationals of that country. The treaty covered all branches of social insurance in force in either of the two countries, including, by virtue of a supplementary agreement of 20 June 1939, unemployment insurance.

The German policy of removing from German soil all foreigners not capable of working was also applied to Italians. An important provision was therefore included that the Italian social insurance funds must, against repayment by the German social insurance institution, take care not only of the dependants while the head of the family was working in Germany or German-held territory, but also of the Italian worker himself, if he was sent back to Italy when sick or disabled.

The sickness insurance of German-employed Italians' dependants living in Italy was covered by a special agreement of 31 March 1941, which provided that the social insurance fund of the country in which they were employed (which received the social insurance contributions) should pay a lump sum to the social insurance fund of the other country, which would grant sickness insurance benefits to the dependants left in their own countries. These lump sums were fixed as follows for the period between 1 June and 31 December 1941: for every calendar month during which the worker worked at least 15 days in an industrial undertaking where social insurance was obligatory, 1.08 RM or 8.25 lire; and under the same conditions for agricultural workers, 0.65 RM or 5.00 lire.<sup>3</sup>

If an Italian worker returned to Italy on account of illness, with the consent of the German sickness insurance fund, the latter was to credit the Italian social insurance fund (which was to take care of the sick worker) with the following amounts (provided al-

<sup>1</sup> Decree by the Reich Minister of Labour, of 17 September 1940; *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 577.

<sup>2</sup> *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 1941, Part II, p. 137.

<sup>3</sup> *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 584 (German-Italian Agreement of 4 August 1941).

ways that the sickness rendered him incapable of working; otherwise, no reimbursement could be claimed): (a) for medical treatment, including expenses for medicines, bandages and other medical supplies, 145 lire (for an agricultural worker, 140 lire); but if he fell sick while on leave in Italy, 75 lire (for an agricultural worker, 70 lire); (b) if ambulatory treatment in an Italian hospital was granted, 72.50 lire (for an agricultural worker, 70 lire); (c) in case of hospitalisation, the regular daily rates for regular Italian patients, plus a lump sum for medical and surgical expenses ranging from 80 to 110 lire.

On 6 August 1942, these financial provisions were superseded by an amendment which came into force retroactively as from 1 January 1942.<sup>1</sup> A much lower, flat lump-sum rate was established to cover all expenses incurred by the social insurance fund of the country concerned. The German social insurance fund undertook to credit the Italian fund with 0.85 RM per month for every Italian working in German industrial or other non-agricultural undertakings covered by compulsory social insurance, and, under the same conditions, with 0.60 RM for every Italian in German agricultural employment. The Italian social insurance fund in its turn was to credit the German fund with 6.47 lire or 4.57 lire per month for every German working respectively in an Italian industrial or other non-agricultural undertaking or in Italian agriculture. Members of the Fascist Corporation of Commercial Employees were covered by special provisions.<sup>2</sup>

Although these agreements were of a reciprocal nature, Germany gained considerably from them, because the number of Italians deported to Germany, and paying compulsory social insurance contributions in Germany, was very much greater than the number of Germans working in Italy.<sup>3</sup>

#### AN EXAMPLE FROM THE ANNEXED TERRITORIES: LUXEMBOURG

In territories which, after occupation by Germany, were incorporated in the Reich, German policy, as far as social insurance was concerned, was to place existing institutions under German administration and to introduce, in principle, German social insurance legislation. One result of this scheme was, of course, to put the assets of the foreign institutions at the disposal of the Germans.

As a rule, German regulations concerning the transition from the pre-annexation to the annexation régime provided that, from the beginning of the German administration, benefits and contributions were to be in accordance with German legislation. The latter was in some cases more, and in some cases less, favourable than the legislation of the annexed territories. If the insured person

<sup>1</sup> *Ausländische Arbeiter*, p. 584 (3), supplement, 20 May 1942.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 585 (5), supplement, 15 Oct. 1942.

<sup>3</sup> Similar, though less detailed, arrangements were made between Germany and Rumania (Provisional Agreement of 23 August 1941, in force from 1 September 1941 and promulgated by Decree of the Reich Minister of Labour, of 13 February 1942; *ibid.*, p. 584 (pp. 13 *et seq.*) and Hungary (Treaty between the German Reich and the Kingdom of Hungary, concluded in Budapest on 20 March 1941: *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1942, Part II, p. 135, as amended by agreements of the same date, and of 24 July 1941; *ibid.*, p. 176).

had acquired, under the pre-annexation régime, more advantageous rights than those provided for under German legislation, he continued, as a rule, to be entitled to these rights. On the other hand, when German legislation was more advantageous to the insured, he was entitled to the higher benefits from the time that German legislation came into force. In other words, the change in the administration was, at least according to the letter of the law, to the advantage of the insured, on the whole, although it must not be forgotten that the German contributions were often higher. This was a propaganda device, used to impress the inhabitants of the newly annexed territories who, in the National Socialist doctrine, were ethnically Germans. On the other hand, this measure of generosity cost Germany nothing; it simply meant that the foreign funds which were taken over had in some instances to grant higher benefits, although their reserves had been computed for lower benefits. The concession did not prevent Germany from depleting the assets of the "annexed" social insurance institutions and from reaping large financial advantage from the reorganisation of the social insurance systems in the annexed territories, e.g., by depleting their assets and crediting them, instead, with Reichsmark claims.

An example of the impact of German wartime policy upon the social insurance system of territories which were incorporated into the Reich, may be taken from the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg.<sup>1</sup>

For a short period, after the invasion of Luxembourg on 10 May 1940, it was considered as enemy territory and placed under German military administration, with a Luxembourg administrative commission, acting under the German commander's control, in charge of civilian affairs; the Luxembourg social insurance legislation remained in force. In July 1940, Adolf Hitler ordered the military administration to be terminated, and placed the country under Gustav Simon, *Gauleiter* of the German district of *Moselland*. From 1 October 1940, Luxembourg social insurance legislation was declared to be superseded by German legislation, and the administration of the Luxembourg social insurance institutions was taken over by, or transformed into, corresponding German institutions.<sup>2</sup>

Whether employed in Luxembourg or in Germany proper,

<sup>1</sup> This information is based on preliminary investigations carried out by the Luxembourg Government after the liberation of the country, and communicated to the I.L.O. in January 1945.

<sup>2</sup> Order of 30 September 1940 (*Verordnungsblatt für Luxemburg*, 1940, p. 22). The sickness insurance funds were ordered to amend their by-laws by 1 Jan. 1941 in accordance with German legislation. Some of them had to change their names. The miners were taken out of the sickness insurance system and put under a new insurance scheme which was administered by the Miners' Insurance Fund in Aachen (*Aachener Knappschaft*) and, later on, also included the Luxembourg metallurgical workers. The pension insurance fund for salaried employees became a branch office (*Amtsstelle*) of the Reich Insurance Fund for Salaried Employees (*Reichsversicherungsanstalt für Angestellte*) in Berlin, the invalidity and old-age insurance fund for workers became a branch office of the State Insurance Fund for the Rhine Province (*Landesversicherungsanstalt Rheinprovinz*) in Düsseldorf, the industrial accident insurance fund was made into a branch office of the Trade Accident Insurance Association for the Machine Making and Light Engineering Industries (*Berufsgenossenschaft für Maschinenbau und Kleisenindustrie*) in Düsseldorf, and the agricultural accident insurance fund was attached to the Rhenish Agricultural Trade Accident Insurance Association (*Rheinische Landwirtschaftliche Berufsgenossenschaft*) in Düsseldorf.



Luxembourgers were henceforth under the same social insurance system and were insured under identical conditions, except that the new regulations safeguarded the rights acquired by insured persons under Luxembourg legislation before 1 October 1940, in so far as those rights were more advantageous to the beneficiary than German legislation would have been.

Various measures were taken by the Germans which diverted social insurance contributions from the Luxembourg to the German social insurance institutions. For example, contributions for insured persons employed at a Luxembourg branch of an undertaking which had its head office in Germany proper went, after 1 July 1942, to the Reich Insurance Fund for Salaried Employees in Berlin, whereas they should have been paid to the Luxembourg fund. On the other hand, German funds were relieved of some obligations, at the expense of Luxembourg funds. For instance, when intensified air warfare against the Reich caused many German workers to remove their families from target areas to safer regions, there was a considerable influx of evacuees into Luxembourg. The German authorities ordered the social insurance funds of the places to which these persons were evacuated—in this case, the Luxembourg institutions—to grant them the benefits due to them under German legislation, although the contributions covering such benefits continued to be paid into the social insurance funds at the place where their breadwinners were employed. The German regulations merely provided that a settlement concerning a refund of these payments would be made at a later date.

The value of a social insurance system is always determined by the actual application of the rules and regulations. According to all indications, the German administration severely reduced the benefits to which Luxembourg insured persons were theoretically entitled, by adopting very rigorous criteria in deciding whether a person was sick or unable to work.

Luxembourg was liberated on 10 September 1944. The preliminary information so far available does not suffice to provide a picture of the development of the sickness insurance institutions under German rule. However, in respect of the other branches of the social insurance system, a comparison can be made between their assets on 10 May 1940 and 10 September 1944. The following figures, resulting from preliminary investigations, are tentative, but the final figures are not likely to differ greatly.

*Assets of the Luxembourg Pension Insurance Fund for Private Salaried Employees (Luxembourg francs)*

	10 May 1940	10 Sept. 1944
Cash.....	205,000	— <sup>1</sup>
Current accounts.....	1,325,000	— <sup>1</sup>
Bonds of the State of Luxembourg or of a similar category, and bonds of Luxembourg local authorities.....	58,650,000	44,644,000
Luxembourg industrial securities.....	5,305,000	1,491,000
Belgian securities.....	1,905,000	1,849,000

Mortgage loans.....	78,904,000	17,654,000
Forests.....	3,995,000	3,995,000
Various outstanding claims.....	1,996,000	— <sup>1</sup>
Total.....	152,285,000 <sup>2</sup>	69,633,000 <sup>2</sup>

The net diminution of the available assets of this institution was thus 82,652,000 francs, or 54 per cent. When the Germans left the country, the pension fund had, however, on its books, a credit of 17,066,000 RM (6,453,000 RM as the nominal value of German Government loans and 10,613,000 RM in cash, current accounts, etc.). According to the official German exchange rate of 10 francs = 1 RM, this credit would amount to 170,660,000 francs; after deduction of 82,652,000 francs, 88,008,000 francs would remain to cover the new liabilities which originated under the German régime. The Luxembourg authorities calculate that this sum would not suffice to cover the new liabilities.

The situation of some of the other Luxembourg social insurance funds changed, in proportion, even more drastically under the German régime, as can be seen from the following figures (in Luxembourg francs):

Luxembourg fund and type of assets	Available assets		Difference
	10 May 1940	10 Sept. 1944	
<i>Invalidity and old-age insurance fund for industrial workers:</i> Luxembourg and Belgian securities and outstanding claims..... Real estate.....	132,837,000 54,372,000	52,560,000 54,372,000	80,277,000
	187,209,000 <sup>1</sup>	106,932,000 <sup>1</sup>	
<i>Employment injury (accident) insurance fund for industrial workers:</i> Securities and outstanding claims..... Real estate.....	93,022,000 2,907,000	39,835,000 2,907,000	53,187,000
	95,929,000 <sup>2</sup>	42,742,000 <sup>2</sup>	
<i>Employment injury (accident) insurance fund for agricultural and forest workers:</i> Securities and outstanding claims..... Real estate.....	9,235,000 285,000	2,340,000 285,000	6,895,000
	9,520,000	2,625,000	

<sup>1</sup> Plus nominal 562,035 RM Young Plan Loan.

<sup>2</sup> Plus 15,137 RM in German loans.

<sup>1</sup> By Order of the Chief of the Civilian Administration in Luxembourg, of 29 January 1941, the cash assets, current accounts and various outstanding claims were converted into Reichsmarks, at the exchange rate of 10 Luxembourg francs = 1 Reichsmark.

<sup>2</sup> To these figures must be added the value of the real estate owned by the Fund (on 10 May 1940, it amounted to 8,490,000 francs).

In other words, at the end of the German rule, the available assets of these three branches of the Luxembourg social insurance system in Luxembourg francs had decreased, respectively, by 43 per cent., 55 per cent., and 73 per cent. These institutions, when the Germans left, also had Reichsmark credits on their books which were to offset these differences and to provide the reserves for the liabilities which had originated during the German régime. These assets amounted to 16,757,000 RM, 7,502,000 RM and 880,000 RM, or, at the official German exchange rate, to 167,570,000 francs, 75,020,000 francs, and 8,800,000 francs, respectively. In order to determine whether these assets would suffice to make up for the losses suffered by the funds and to provide the reserves needed, under Luxembourg legislation, to carry out the obligations which originated during the German régime, it will be necessary to ascertain the extent to which the obligations assumed by the German administration on behalf of the Luxembourg institutions exceed those which would have been incurred under Luxembourg legislation.

For a final evaluation of the effects of the German administration of the Luxembourg social insurance system, three additional points will have to be taken into consideration.

The value of the immovable assets (buildings and forests) owned by the institutions was smaller at the end of the German rule than it had been before the German invasion, partly as a result of depreciation of these assets and partly as a result of war damage. Moreover, much additional war damage was caused during the short second German invasion of Luxembourg in December 1944. None of these losses appears in the tables above.

Secondly, in consequence of the diminished purchasing power of the currencies in the annexed territories during German rule, the social insurance systems of these countries will be forced to increase the amounts of the benefits if they wish to keep them at the pre-war level.

Thirdly, the war casualties suffered by the insured population and the difficult conditions under which the insured persons had to live and work during the war will, in many respects, increase the burden of the social insurance systems of the territories annexed by Germany during the war.

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This brief description shows the complexity of the problems created by German wartime measures in the annexed territories whose populations were, according to National Socialist doctrine, considered "ethnically German" and were, therefore, ruled with less severity than the occupied "foreign" territories.

It should also be noted that Luxembourg was one of the most favoured of the annexed territories. From the information so far available, it appears, for example, that the damage done by the German administration to the social insurance system of the Sudeten region will be relatively greater and that the situation of the social insurance funds in the Polish provinces annexed by the Reich is even worse.

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## APPENDIX VIII

### THE DEPORTATION OF BELGIAN WORKERS IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR

In the earlier phases of the First World War Germany exercised considerable pressure on Belgian workers to induce them either to work for the German occupation authorities in Belgium or to move to the Reich and accept employment in German war industry or agriculture. But, owing to the resistance of the Belgians, this scheme proved unsatisfactory to the occupying Power.

On 2 March 1916, the Reich War Ministry informed General von Bissing, the German Commander in Belgium, that it desired the transfer of 400,000 Belgian workers to Germany. (The German Commander in Belgium administered part of the country, called the Government-General, while the rest of German-occupied Belgium, called the *zone d'étape*—zone in the rear of the front—was administered by the Fourth German Army.)

General von Bissing realised that such a step would be contrary to the commitments entered into by Germany when it signed and ratified the "Regulations respecting the Laws and Customs of War on Land" adopted by the International Peace Conferences at the Hague in 1899 and 1907<sup>1</sup>; he therefore "peremptorily rejected the

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<sup>1</sup> The "Regulations respecting the Laws and Customs of War on Land", annexed to the IVth Hague Convention, regulate, in Section III, the rights of the "Military Authority over the Territory of the Hostile State". The relevant articles provide:

Art. 43. The authority of the legitimate Power having actually passed into the hands of the occupant, the latter shall take all steps in his power to re-establish and ensure, as far as possible, public order and safety, while respecting, unless absolutely prevented, the laws in force in the country.

Art. 46. Family honour and rights, the lives of individuals and private property, as well as religious convictions and liberty of worship, must be respected.

.....  
Art. 52. Neither requisitions in kind nor services can be demanded from communes or inhabitants except for the necessities of the army of occupation. They must be in proportion to the resources of the country, and of such nature as not to imply for the population any obligation to take part in military operations against their country.

These requisitions and services shall only be demanded on the authority of the Commander in the locality occupied.

.....  
In 1907 the Second International Peace Conference at the Hague added the following provision to Article 23 in Section II ("Hostilities") of the Regulations:

A belligerent is likewise forbidden to compel the nationals of the adverse party to take part in the operations of war directed against their country,

(Footnote continued overleaf)

idea of the mass transportation of Belgian workers by force".<sup>1</sup> In his reply of 14 March 1916, to the German Deputy War Minister he pointed out that such action would create "great dissatisfaction in America and in the neutral countries generally", and emphasised that "it would be particularly difficult to avoid a flagrant violation of the Hague Convention". By letter of 12 April 1916, he also notified the Reich Chancellor of his opposition, and subsequently the plan was "unanimously" dropped<sup>2</sup>, but only for a short time. Quartermaster-General Ludendorff informed him on 14 September 1916 that "all objections based on social considerations and international law must absolutely yield" to the necessity of using all available manpower.<sup>3</sup> General von Bissing still objected strongly, maintaining that he had to abide by the Hague Convention, and even intimated that he would have to resign unless his view prevailed<sup>4</sup>, but he obeyed because the Emperor sided with the Supreme Command. When the forced deportation of Belgian workers was finally ordered on 3 October 1916, the Decree was issued, not on behalf of General von Bissing, but of the Quartermaster-General.

This Decree deeply shocked world opinion. In the ensuing weeks, the famous protest by Cardinal Mercier, Archbishop of Malines, was followed by similarly emphatic declarations, signed by Belgian authorities, trade unions, public figures, bishops, and scientists in occupied Belgium itself. The Belgian Government in exile at Havre, in a note sent to the Belgian Ministers in Rome and Madrid, for transmission to the Holy See and Spain, called the deportation a *crime de lèse-humanité*.<sup>5</sup>

The first neutral Power to intervene officially with the German Government (10 November 1916) was Spain, as the protector of Belgian rights vis-à-vis Germany, and the Holy See declared its support of Spain's attitude. Switzerland, the United States of America, the Netherlands and Brazil followed suit. The protest of the United States of America called the action "in contravention of all precedent and of those human principles of international practice which have long been accepted and followed by civilised

even when they have been in his service before the commencement of the war.

In addition, the preamble to the Fourth Hague Convention stipulates:

Until a more complete code of the laws of war can be issued, the High Contracting Parties think it expedient to declare that in cases not included in the Regulations adopted by them, populations and belligerents remain under the protection and the rule of the principles of the law of nations, as they result from the usages established between civilised nations, from the laws of humanity, and the requirements of the public conscience.

<sup>1</sup> Ludwig von KÖHLER: *Die Staatsverwaltung der besetzten Gebiete, Band I: Belgien* (Stuttgart-New Haven, 1927), p. 149 (translated by W. R. DITTMAR: *The Administration of the Occupied Territories*, reproduced by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, with preface by Phillip Jessup, Washington, D.C., 1942).

<sup>2</sup> KÖHLER, *op. cit.*, p. 150.

<sup>3</sup> According to J. PIRENNE and M. VAUTHIER (*La législation et l'administration allemandes en Belgique*, Paris-New Haven, 1925, p. 56), the German Supreme Command demanded at that time 300,000 Belgian workers.

<sup>4</sup> H. PIRENNE: *La Belgique et la guerre mondiale* (Paris-New Haven, 1928), p. 188.

<sup>5</sup> The Note of 13 November 1916 is reprinted in *Revue générale du droit international public*, Vol. 24 (1917), Documents, p. 49.

nations in their treatment of non-combatants in conquered territory".<sup>1</sup>

The protests were not confined to non-Germans. On 2 December 1916, two leaders of the Social Democratic opposition urged the German Government in the Reichstag to end at once the deportation of forced labour from occupied territory, especially from Belgium, and accused the Government of infringement of the Hague Convention. As a sign of protest, the Social Democrats declined, for the first time since the beginning of the war, to vote for the budget.<sup>2</sup> The German trade unions, from which knowledge of the scheme had been withheld as long as possible, also made strong efforts to have the measures rescinded.

In view of the general indignation, the German Government yielded. By the middle of February 1917, deportations from the part of Belgium administered by General von Bissing stopped. The repatriation of deportees who did not volunteer to continue work in Germany was to be completed by 1 June 1917. However, the recruitment of Belgians for work either within Belgium or in northern France continued, especially in the *zone d'étape*. These labour recruits were forced to work for the German occupation authorities in so-called "civilian workers' battalions".

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After the First World War, the question arose whether Germany, in addition to paying indemnities for the deportation of workers into Germany proper, was also liable to pay indemnities for those Belgians whom it had forcibly removed, not to the Reich, but to other regions of their own country or to northern France, then partially occupied by Germany.

The Belgian Government stated in its memorandum submitted to the Reparations Commission<sup>3</sup>: "workers who had been compelled to do forced labour and were removed either into the interior of the country or from Belgium into France, as was the case in the border regions, are considered as falling into the same category as those deported to Germany". The Belgian Government therefore reached a total figure of 160,000<sup>4</sup> deportees. Having established that the deportations averaged seven months in duration, of which an

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Green Haywood HACKWORTH, in *Digest of International Law*, Vol. VI (Washington, 1943), p. 399. For a fuller discussion of the actions of the neutrals, see Fernand PASSELECQ: *Déportation et travail forcé des ouvriers et de la population civile de la Belgique occupée (1916-1918)* (Paris-New Haven, 1927), pp. 286-308.

<sup>2</sup> P. UMBREIT and CH. LORENZ: *Der Krieg und die Arbeitsverhältnisse* (Berlin-New Haven, 1928), p. 123.

<sup>3</sup> *Mémoire sur les dommages de guerre subis par la Belgique*, Ch. VI, Part I, entitled "Rémunération aux déportés", quoted in the case of *Jules-Hector Loriaux c. Etat allemand*, in *Recueil des décisions des tribunaux mixtes* (Paris, 1924-25), Vol. V, p. 684.

<sup>4</sup> The figure of 160,000 left out only "the Belgian deportees of the first period of the German invasion and the political deportees" (*ibid.*). The German figure of "approximately 60,000" (KÖHLER, *loc. cit.*) only took into account Belgians removed from Belgium into Germany. On the basis of Belgian investigations, PASSELECQ, *op. cit.*, p. 398, reached a figure of 58,500 workers transported to Germany.

average of five months was spent in forced labour, and assessing at six francs the "just remuneration" which the Treaty of Versailles granted to the deportees<sup>1</sup>, the Belgian Government calculated the liability resulting to Germany at 144 million francs (namely 160,000 deportees  $\times$  150 days  $\times$  6 francs). Altogether, the Belgian claims submitted to the Reparations Commission for compensation for civilian victims and their dependants and legal successors amounted to 492,131,000 Belgian francs. This sum was accepted by the Reparations Commission, although it was not fully included in the final computation of the German reparation debt of 132,000 million gold marks. In arriving at this latter figure, the Reparations Commission made deductions from the sum total of the claims of the Allied and Associated Powers, without however questioning the legal or factual justification of the amounts originally claimed.<sup>2</sup>

In both World Wars it was the policy of the German authorities, whenever possible, to make the conscripted foreign worker sign a labour contract in which he agreed to being displaced and to being employed in or for Germany. In a test case in which the plaintiff was a former Belgian wartime deportee who had been forced by German authorities to sign a labour contract, the German-Belgian Mixed Arbitral Tribunal, set up under the Versailles Treaty, declared (decision of 3 June 1924): "The labour contracts have, in fact, their origin and source in acts of violence which, systematically exercised on an entire portion of the civilian population, constitute the gravest violation of the law of nations".<sup>3</sup> If the signing of the contract was a genuinely voluntary act on the part of the worker, no violation of the provisions intended to protect non-combatant civilians in territories under wartime occupation was involved. But in the great majority of cases, the workers had signed under coercion. Evidently, if a "contract even when expressed in writing, is based primarily on violence systematically exercised on whole portions of the civil population", such a document cannot be considered as expressing the free will of the coerced person and therefore does not legitimise deportation.

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<sup>1</sup> In assessing the claim at 6 francs per day of forced labour, the memorandum of the Belgian Government to the Reparations Commission declared that it considered itself "permitted not to take into account the wage paid by the German authorities" (*Mémoire sur les dommages de guerre subis par la Belgique, op. cit.*).

<sup>2</sup> In July 1925, the German Government agreed with a federation representing former Belgian deportees to pay a lump-sum indemnification of 24 million francs, subject to the approval of the Belgian-German Mixed Arbitral Tribunal set up under the Treaty of Versailles. This payment was to be independent of the German reparation payments (*The Times*, London, 14 July 1925, quoted by Arnold J. TOYNBEE: *Survey of International Affairs, 1924* (London 1926), p. 401; cf. L. OPPENHEIM: *International Law* (5th edition, ed. by Lauterpacht, Cambridge, 1935), Vol. 2, p. 352).

<sup>3</sup> Case of *Loriaux c. Etat allemand*.





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